Brahmins

THROUGH THE AGES

A STUDY OF THEIR SOCIAL, CULTURAL, POLITICAL, RELIGIOUS AND ECONOMIC LIFE

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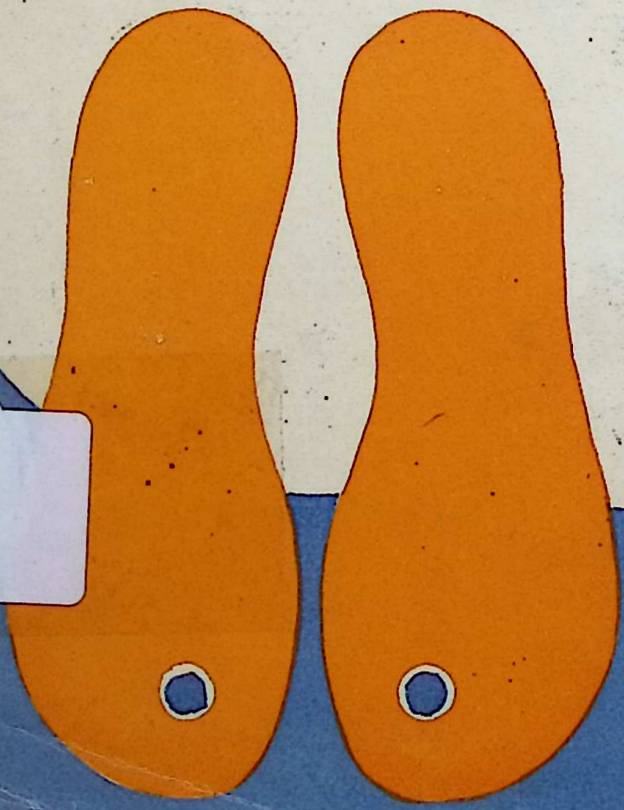

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BRAHMINS THROUGH THE AGES

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THEIR SOCIAL, RELIGIOUS, CULTURAL, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC LIFE

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DEDICATED TO
THE SACRED MEMORY OF
MY REVERED TEACHER
LATE DR. DEV RAJ CHANANA

Foreword

This is a known fact that Brahmins held the most prominent place in the cultural and political fields in Ancient India. The intellectual leadership of Hindu Society remained in the hands of Brahmins. In all probability, the Aryans admitted the indigenous people into their fold. The function of an individual was, therefore, the main criteria for determining the 'Varṇa'. Pāṇini, the great grammarian (Fifth Century B. C.) explained Brahmin as one who learnt Veda and who studied Veda, 'Tadadhīte tadveda' (Pāṇini 4.2.59). In the process of evolution the Varṇa system, however, changed in course of time and by and by acquired a rigid position. This rigidity of Varṇa system gradually helped the Brahmins to acquire more and more prestige and power in the society.

The origin and evolution of Brahmins through the ages has been most successfully investigated by Dr. R. N. Sharma in the present book, which ransacks from first hand sources the position of Brahmins in the Vedic age, the pre-Mauryan, the Mauryan and the post-Mauryan periods, when Brahmanic renaissance attained the highly respectable social position. Dr. Sharma has thoroughly examined the position of Brahmins from the earliest times in the socio-political and religio-cultural fields. It is gratifying to note that not only the Vedic and classical Sanskrit and Pali sources but the Archaeological, Etymological and Anthropological sources have also been examined. The book presents a trustworthy survey of the metamorphosis of the position of Brahmins in the different periods of Indian History.

I have great pleasure to add this Foreword to this excellent book by my friend and colleague Dr. R.N. Sharma who has assessed the position of Brahmins in a scholarly manner.

I congratulate him for his objective and fascinating study in the subject and I trust this will be well received by the scholars of Sanskrit and Ancient Indian History in India and abroad. The book is a result of painstaking research and is bound to bring credit and reputation to Dr. Sharma and deserves recognition.

Delhi
13.5.77

—RASIK VIHARI JOSHI,
Professor and Head of the
Sanskrit Department,
University of Delhi,
Delhi.

Preface

A cursory glance at society in Ancient India makes it clear that Brahmins held a very prominent place in almost all the important domains of life. In the field of culture, our most precious heritage, the Brahmins held sway. In political affairs, practically nothing was possible without the advice of the counsellors who used to be largely Brahmins. That they were prominent also in other fields can be learnt from a *perusal* of ancient records. In fact, the prominent role played by the Brahmins continued right up to the present century. During the middle Ages, they had the last word as intellectual leaders of Hindu Society. In recent times, they have been prominent among the leaders of our national movement.

But it is strange that all this notwithstanding, practically very little work has been done on the origin and evolution of Brahmins as a distinct social group. Most of the facts known about them still remain to be investigated or are to be found as passing remarks in the treatises on caste-system such as the Śūdras who have attracted the attention of scholars more than any other social group of Indian Society.

Even if one were to look at the problem only from the point of culture, one cannot help remarking that Brahmins have bequeathed to us a precious heritage in the form of the overwhelming majority of their works in Sanskrit Literature, by far the richest part of our heritage. In fact this language, which has been the vehicle of Indian culture abroad, is in itself the creation of Brahmins. The contribution of Brahmin converts to Buddhism and Jainism, to literature in Pāli and Ardhamāgadhī is no less remarkable.

In the present work an attempt has been made to examine the position of the Brahmins from the Earliest times to 300 A.D. The work is primarily devoted to a study of their position in the social, religious, political and cultural fields—where they held undisputed sway in those times. It also attempts a survey of their economic affairs and seeks to assess the importance of

their role in different fields.

Our sources are primarily the texts in Sanskrit literature, although help is sought from Pali texts, Archaelogy, Ethnology, Anthropology, etc. We have generally followed the dates as accepted by Prof. P.V. Kane in his *History of Dharma-śāstra*.

The first Chapter deals with an examination of sources available in the Vedas and Brāhmaṇas. These works are mostly religious in character but provide us with data about the *Varṇas*, occupations, duties, *saṁskāras*, education, marriage, privileges and punishments.

The second chapter depicts the status of the Brahmins as teachers and as householders on the basis of Kalpa Sūtras. This rich source is supported by material gleaned from the Upaniṣads, the early technical texts such as the *Nirukta* and the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* as also from early Pāli texts, viz. Majjhima Nikāya, Dīgha Nikāya, Aṅguttara Nikāya, Vinaya Piṭaka and the Jātakas. "There can be no difficulty in accepting facts attested by all these sources; where such concord is wanting, materials furnished by Buddhist and Jaina sources may be taken as reflecting more of actual conditions than the rules laid down in Dharma-Sūtras"[1]. The facts of Dharma-Sūtras are corroborated by the other sources.

The third chapter discusses the position of the Brahmins from about the 3rd century B.C. to 2nd century B.C. and draws its data from Kauṭalya's *Arthaśāstra*. These data are supported by the material drawn from Megasthenes and the Aśokan Inscriptions.

The fourth chapter deals with the position of the Brahmins in the Gupta-Age, and incorporates material from Smṛtis like those of Manu, Nārada, Bṛhaspati, Yājñavalkya and Kātyāyana. This information is supplemented by the material of medical treatises of Suśruta and Caraka, from the Mahābhāṣya, the Kāmasūtra, and from texts such as the Buddhacarita, Saundarananda, Vajrasūcī Upaniṣad and Milindapañha.

The fifth, the concluding chapter is in attempt to present a rapid survey of the position and the role of the Brahmins in each period. It also recounts the changes, the ups and downs in their position in course of their struggle for power and their status

1. Sharma (R.S.), *Śūdras in Ancient India*, p. 87.

in the different periods of Indian History.

In dealing with the subject in each chapter a uniform scheme has been adopted. Conduct, education, marriage, duties, occupations, social and legal privileges occupy a prominent place in the description of the Brahmins; these have been discussed at the beginning of each chapter. Besides, their food habits, beliefs, behaviour, and means of entertainment have also been studied. These aspects of their lives from the earliest times to 300 A.D. throw vivid light on their position during the period under discussion.

I am profoundly indebted to the oriental scholars both of East and West whose writings have inspired me in my present venture. With a deep sense of gratitude and due deference I offer my salutations to the sacred memory of my Guru, the late Dr. Dev Raj Chanana, an unrivalled scholar of indology and an acknowledged authority on ancient Indian History and Culture. His unique scholarship as also altruistic love and kindness served as my main stay and prop. It was this great Sanskritist who initiated me in this field of research. Though physically no more in this world, his undying spirit, Ātman, had always been guiding my path all these years.

I am equally indebted to my Guru Dr. Rasik Vihari Joshi, Professor and Head of the Sanskrit Department, University of Delhi, who is a great scholar as well as a spiritualist. I can never forget the encouragement I received from him from time to time. He has very kindly added to the value of this book by writing a foreword.

Dr. Satya Vrat Shastri, Professor of Sanskrit and formerly Dean of Faculty of Arts in the University of Delhi, has constantly shown his unreserved interest in my work. My thanks are due to him. Dr. B.M. Chaturvedi, Reader in Sanskrit in the University of Delhi has also encouraged me by giving constructive suggestions and also by introducing me to the world of printing and for this he deserves my thanks.

Hindu College, Delhi-7 —R. N. SHARMA
25th May, 1977.

Abbreviations

Agni.G.S.—Agniveśya Gṛhya-Sūtra.
AIMA or Ancient—Ancient India as Described by Megasthenes and Arrian.
Ait. Br.—Aitareya Brāhmaṇa.
Aṅg. N.—Aṅguttara Nikāya.
Āp. Dh.S.—Āpastamba Dharmasūtra.
Āp. Gh.S.—Āpastamba Gṛhyasūtra.
Āp. Śr. S.—Āpastamba Śrautasūtra.
AŚ—Arthaśāstra.
Aspects—Aspects of Political Ideas and Institutions in Ancient India.
ASS—Ānandāśrma Sanskrit Series.
Āśva. Gr. S.—Āśvalāyana Gṛhyasūtra.
Āśva. Śr.S.—Āśvalāyana Śrautasūtra.
AV.—Atharvaveda.
Bau. Dh. S.—Baudhāyana Dharmasūtra.
Bau. Gr. S.—Baudhāyana Gṛhyasūtra.
Bhār. Gr. S.—Bhāradvāja Gṛhyasūtra.
Bṛ. or Bṛh.—Bṛhaspatismṛti.
Bṛ. Up.—Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad.
Chā or Ch. Up.—Chāndogya Upaniṣad.
CHI or Cambridge—Cambridge History of India.
Dīgha. N. or D.N.—Dīgha Nikāya.
Divyā—Divyāvadāna.
Education—Ancient Indian Education.
Gaut. or Gau. Dh.S.—Gautama Dharmasūtra.
Go. G.S.—Gobhila Gṛhyasūtra.
HIL—History of Indian Literature.
Hindu—Hindu Public Life.
Hir. G.S.—Hiraṇyakeśin Gṛhya-sūtra.

Hist. Dh. S. (H.D.S.)—History of Dharma-śāstra.
HOS—Harvard Oriental Series.
History—History of Sanskrit Literature.
IA—Indian Antiquary, Bombay.
IHQ—Indian Historical Quarterly, Calcutta.
India—India as Described in Early Texts of Buddhism and Jainism.
Jai.—Jaiminīya Gṛhyasūtra.
JAOS—Journal of the American Oriental Society, Baltimore.
JASB—Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta.
JBBRAS—Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, Bombay.
Ka. Saṁ—Kaṭha-Saṁhitā.
Kā. Śr. S.—Kātyāyana Śrautasūtra.
Kh. G.S.—Khādira Gṛhya-sūtra.
Kāma. S.—Kāmasūtra.
Kap. S.—Kapiṣṭhala Saṁhitā.
Kat. Ś.S.—Kātyāyana Śrauta-Sūtra.
Kāṭh. G.S. Kāṭhaka Gṛhya-Sūtra.
Kātyā.—Kātyāyana Smṛti.
Kau. Up.—Kauṣītakī Upaniṣad.
Kau. Br—Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇa.
KS—Kāṭhaka Saṁhitā.
Lāṭyā. Śr.S.—Lāṭyāyana Śrautasūtra.
Majj. N. or M.N.—Majjhima Nikāya.
Mait. Saṁ—Maitrāyaṇī Saṁhitā.
Muṇḍ.—Up.—Muṇḍakopaniṣad.
Manu—Manu Smṛti.
Milinda—Milindapañha.
Nār.—Nārada Smṛti.
Pā—Pāṇini Grammar
Pāṇ.—Pānini
Pañ. Br.—Pañcaviṁśa Brāhmaṇa.
Pār. Gr. S.—Pāraskara Gṛhyasūtra.
Pat.—Pātañjala Mahābhāṣya.
P.E.—Pillar Edicts of Aśoka.
PHAI—Political History of Ancient India.
Pra. Up— Praśna Upaniṣad.

Polity— Some aspects of Ancient Indian Polity.
PTS.—Pāli Text Society.
Rām.—Rāmāyaṇa.
R.E.—Rock Edicts of Aśoka.
Religion—Religion des Veda.
ṚV—Ṛgveda.
Saṁ. N.—Saṁyutta Nikāya.
Sām. Br.—Sāmavidhāna Brāhmaṇa.
Śāṅkh. Gr. S.—Śāṅkhāyana Gṛhyasūtra.
Śāṅkh or Śāṅ. Śr. S.—Śāṅkhāyana Śrautasūtra.
Śat. Br.—Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa.
Satyā. Śr. S.—Satyāṣāḍha Śrautasūtra.
SBB— Sacred Books of the Buddhist.
SONI—Social Organisation of North Eastern India.
Śūdra—Śūdras in Ancient India.
Sut. Nipā.—Sutta Nipāta.
Tai. Br.—Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa.
TS or Tai.—Taittirīya Saṁhitā.
Vedic Age or Vedic—The Vedic Age.
Vas. Dh.S.—Vāsiṣṭha Dharmasūtra.
VI—Vedic Index.
Vaikh. G.S.—Vaikhānasa Gṛhya-sūtra.
VS or Vās.—Vājasaneyi Saṁhitā.
Yāj—Yājñavalkya Smṛti.

ROMAN EQUIVALENTS OF NĀGARĪ LETTERS

अ	a
आ	ā
इ	i
ई	ī
उ	u
ऊ	ū
ए	e
ऐ	ai
ओ	o
औ	au
ऋ	ṛ
क्	k
ख्	kh
ग्	g
घ्	gh
ङ्	ṅ
च्	c
छ्	ch
ज्	j
झ्	jh
ञ्	ñ
ट्	ṭ
ठ्	ṭh
ड्	ḍ
ढ्	ḍh
ण्	ṇ
त्	t
थ्	th
द्	d
ध्	dh
न्	n
प	p
फ	ph
ब	b
भ	bh
म	m
य	y
र	r
ल	l
व	v
श	ś
ष	ṣ
स	s
ह	h

Anusvara—ṁ
Visarga : ḥ

Contents

Foreword..... VII
Preface..... IX
Abbreviations..... XIII
Roman Equivalents of Nāgarī Letters..... XVI

1. BRAHMINS IN THE VEDIC AGE 1—56

Who is a Brahmin ? 1—8
Physical Features : Complexion 4; Dress 5; Ornaments 6; Hair-Dressing 8; Language 8.
Education : 9—11
Upanayana 10; Duties of a Student 10; Status of the teacher 10; Institutions 10.
The Householder : 11—16
Marriage 11; Entertainment 12; Food 13; Drinks 14; Certain Beliefs 15.
Duties of the Brahmins : 16—18
Ensuring Pure Descent 16; Good conduct 17; Study of the Vedas 17.
Assemblies : 18—21
Performing of the sacrifices 20.
Gainful Occupations : 21—30
Teaching 21; Working as Priests 25.
Village Priests : 31—34
Number of the Priests 31; Hotā 32; Udgātā 33; Adhvaryu 33; Brahman 33.
Royal Priests : 34—38
Functions of the Purohita : 38—45
Officiating at sacrifices 38; To accompany the king to the Battlefield 39; Protection of the realm and dignity 39; To act as Ratnin at the coronation of the king 42; Receiving of gifts 43.
Other Means of Livelihood : 45—46.
Social Position : 46—53
Brahmin's place in society 46; Position of Respect 52.
The Brahmin and Law : 53—56
Safety of Brahmin's person and property 53; Legal Privileges 54.

2. BRAHMINS IN THE PRE-MAURYAN PERIOD 57—153

Who is a Brahmin ? 57
A Real Brahmin 57
Physical Features : Complexion 61; Dress 64; Ornaments 64; Language 66.
Rituals for a Brahmin-child 68—70
Nāmakaraṇa 68; Cūḍākaraṇa 68; The establishing of

the fire 69; Upanayana 70; Upanayana rite 70
Upanayana rite : 70—71
Education : 71—75
Place of Education 71; Period of Education 71; Age of the Student 72; Season fit for Upanayana 74.
Students' Dress : 74—82
Upper Dress 75; Lower Dress 75; The Girdle 76; The Staff 76; The Sacred Thread 76; The Sāvitrī 76; Alms 77; Designations 77; Relationship with the teacher 78; Teacher and the Students 79; Types of Teacher 79; Teacher's fee 81.
The Householder : 82—94
Place of Residence 82; Assembly 84; Marriage 86; Inheritance of property 93.
Food and Entertainment : 94—99
Food 94; Entertainment 96; Journey's End 98.
Certain Beliefs : 99
Debts 99; Tīrthas 99; Purity of the Hand and Mouth 99.
Duties of a Brahmin : 100—102
The Study of the Vedas 100; Sacrifices 102; Alms-giving 102.
Gainful Occupations : 102—103
Occupations : 103—105
Teaching of the Vedas 103.
Working as Priests : 105—120
Priesthood 105; Selection of a priest 108; Śrāddha 111; Feeding of the Brahmins on other occasions 114; Accepting gifts 116.
Other Occupations : 120—125
The Royal Purohita 120; The Rulers 123; The Ministers 124.
The Fighters : 125
Commander-in-Chief 125; Soldiers 125; Other Councillors 126; The Judge 126; The Tiller and the Trader 128; Trade 129; Money-lender 131; Miscellaneous 132.
Social Position : 134—142
Brahmin as the expounder of duties 134; Brahmin and Auspiciousness 135; Respect for the learned Brahmins 135; Decent behaviour 136; Brahmin on the road 137; Brahmins as a guest 137; Commensality 139; Duty of the state to maintain the Brahmins 141;
The Brahmin and Law : 142—149
Inviolability of person 142; Inviolability of property 145; Special personal and proprietory rights 146;

Immunity from taxation 146; Adultery 147;
Witness 148; Brahmin and the treasure-trove 149;
Conclusion : 149—153

3. BRAHMINS IN THE MAURYAN PERIOD 154—178

Who is a Brahmin ? 154
The House-holder : 154—158
Marriage 154; Forms of marriage 154;
Niyoga 155; Unlawful Marriages 155;
Widow-remarriage 155; Divorce 155;
Account of the Greek-traveller 156; Inheritance 157;
Food and Drink 158; Miscellaneous 158;
Duties of a Brahmin : 158—159
Gainful Occupations : 159—160
Teaching 159;
Conducting of Sacrifices : 160—166
The Royal Purohita 162; Receiving of gifts 165;
Gleaning of corns; 166;
Other Occupations : 166—168
Astrologers 166; Spies and informers 166;
Envoys 167; Soldiers and generals 167;
Social position of the Brahmins : 168
Privileges of the Śrotriyas : 168—173
Immunity of property from confiscation
and escheat 168; Royal grants 169;
Freedom from toll 169; Right of appropriation
of ripe fruits and flowers : 169;
Other concessions 169; Free passes 170;
Invitation for feasts 170; Exemption from dues 170;
Brahmin's Property 170; High place in
Society 170; Brahmin and the State 172.
The Brahmin and Law : 173
Punishments 173; Fines for defamation and
abusing 173; Punishment for Striking 175;
Adultery 176; Fine for Traffic in Śūdra 176;
Fine for illegal constructions 176;
Punishment for a sacrificer and a priest 177;
Fine for using force 177.
Summing up : 178.

4. BRAHMINS IN THE POST-MAURYAN PERIOD 179—224

Who is a Brahmin ? 179—183.

Varṇa-System 179; Pre-emience of the Brahmin 180.
Education : 183—186.
Upanayana 183; Place of teaching and period of studentship 184; Curriculum 184 ; The relation between the teacher and the taught 185; Duties of a student 185; Teacher's fee 186; Begging 186; Kinds of graduates 186.
The householder : 186—190.
Marriage 186; Inheritance 188; Food and Entertainment 188.
Miscellaneous : 190—194.
Naming ceremony 190; Guest-honouring 191; Mode of salutation 192; Mode of enquiry 192; Mourning period 192; Certain beliefs 193; Commensality 193.
Duties : 195—199.
Learning 195; Sacrificing 197; Giving of gifts 198.
Gainful Occupations : 199—206.
Accepting of Alms 199; Teaching 202; Working as Priests 203; Śrāddha 205; Brahmin-Judges 205.
Other means of livelihood : 206—209.
Gleaning of corns 206; Occupations in distress 208: Receiving interest on money 208; Accepting of Śūdra's food 208.
Low Occupations : 209—210
Soldiery 209.
Social Position : 210—214
Respect of the Brahmin 210; Brahmin on the Road 212; Exemption from taxes 212; Tax on Business 212; Expounder of Duties 218; State-help 213; Brahmin's Superiority 213.
The Brahmin and Law : 214
Capital punishment 214; Security of life 214; Punishment for rape or adultery 216; Witness 217; Hearing of the Cases 219; Defamation 219; Insult 220; Fines for abusing 221; Assault on a Brahmin 221; Uttering of undesirable words for a Brahmin 222; Sitting on an equal seat 222; Punishment for pretending to be a Brahmin 222.

5. CONCLUSION 225—227

BIBLIOGRAPHY 228—240
INDEX 241—253

1

Brahmins in the Vedic Age

WHO IS A BRAHMIN ?

The word Brahmin denotes a person born in a Brahmin Family or of Brahmin parents. No such meaning is indicated in the hymns of the Ṛgveda, where it occurs but rarely[1]. The word 'Brahman' is both masculine and neuter. Its neuter[2] form denotes prayers addressed to different gods[3] whereas its masculine form merely denotes the sage, the poet, the officiating priest or a special priest, designated as *Brahman*[4]. It would mean that a person, possessed of *Brahma* (Prayer), was called Brahman. With the rise of the cult of sacrifice he was entrusted with the work of the officiating priest. Thus Brahminhood was determined by function and not by birth, in the earliest Rgvedic society[5].

It has been suggested by some scholars that in the Ṛgvedic age the post of the king and the priest was held by a single

1. (A. A.) Macdonell, *A History of Sanskrit Literature*, p. 136. "The word *Barhman*...occurring only eight times while brahman which simply means sage or officiating priest is found forty six times." But in the Veda Brahmin is not really an officiating priest. He is silently watching the performance of others, intervening only, thanks to his science, to repair the faults.
2. Muir : *Oringinal Sanskrit Texts*, Vol. I, p. 242. (In Brahman neuter the accent is on the first syllable while in Brahman masculine on the last).
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. (Charles) Drekmeier, '*Kingship and Community in Early India*', p. 80. The author observes, "There is no indication that membership in the Brahmin class was originally confined to offsprings of Brahmins. At first knowledge and conduct rather than birth may have been the determining factor."

person[1] as in the other Indo-European races and when the king was over-burdened with administrative chores and the sacrificial rituals had become complex, the need for a person, able to devote his full time to the sacrificial rituals was felt. In this way priesthood was separated from kingship. With the passage of time and due to the growth of administrative works, the king gradually became far removed from the science of ritual and this knowledge was cherished by the priests. According to Max Weber it was perhaps the time when "The magician had invaded the circles of ancient priestly nobles and finally had taken over their legacy."[2]

The institution of 'Priesthood' goes back to Indo-European times[3] as its existence can be traced in countries like Iran, Greece and Germany etc. where Indo-European peoples settled after migration. But according to Pargiter[4] and Kosambi[5], the priests (of course a large number of them) were recruited from the conquered aboriginies by the Aryan invaders. "Brahmanism" says Pargiter, "originally was not Aila or Aryan institution. The earliest Brahmins were connected with non-Aryan people, and were established among them when Ailas entered."[6] The learned author further establishes a connection

1. (N. N.) Law; "*Aspects of Ancient India Polity*", p. 42. Max-Weber, *Religion of India, pp.* 29-31. See also (R. S.) Sharma, '*Aspects of Political Ideas And Institutions in Ancient India*', p. 70. "Generally in primitive societies no distinction can be made between the war-chief and the priest in many cases the same person combining both offices. The evidence in case of the Ancient India is not strong but not altogether wanting." Thus there is "the case of Viśvāmitra, a *rājanya* of Bharata and Kauśika families (R.V. III. 53.9-12) who acted as the priest of the king Sudās and hotā priest at the sacrifice of Hariścandra. Similarly Devāpi, the priest of king Śantaun, is represented by Yāska as the elder brother of Śantanu. All this might suggest that at one stage in Vedic India also the functions of the chief and the priest were exercised by the same person."
2. (Max) Weber, Religion of India, p. 29-31.
3. Rapson, '*The Cambridge History of India*', p. 111-12.
4. Pargiter, '*Ancient Indian Historical Tradition*', pp. 306-8.
5. (D. D.) Kosambi, '*An Introduction to the study of Indian History*'. pp. 97-8.
6. Pargiter, op. cit. pp. 306-7.

between the demons and the Brahmins on the basis of certain stories of the Mahābhārata. "The ideas, that Brahmins were priests to demons, that the demons themselves were priests, and the chief of the gods incurred the most heinous sin by killing demons, were so grotesque, if not blasphemous to orthodox Brahmanism, that they could never have been imagined in latter times, and are not I believe to be found in Brahmanical literature."[1] Indra is often referred to in the hymns and in the epic tradition as the slayer of Vṛtra who was a Brahmin.[2] Pargiter believes that the similarity between the non-Aryan and *Aryan* names is due to their Sanskritization or their translation into Sanskrit equivalents[3]. In this way developed priesthood was considered as a pre-Aryan institution. Having examined both the view-points, one may conclude with Prof. R.S. Sharma that "though *Brāhmaṇa* as such was an Indo-European institution, the priestly class of the *Aryan* conquerors may have been largely recruited from among the conquered. Though there is nothing to indicate the proportion, it seems that some of the pre-Aryan priests found their way into the new society."[4]

The honoured position which priests got in the new-Aryan society was perhaps due to their 'occult' faculties and powers.[5] Hence "it appears that the original Brahmins were not so much priests as 'adepts' in matters supernatural, 'masters' of magico-religious force, wizards, medicine-men."[6] In this connection Max Weber says, "Originally the Brahmins were magicians who developed into a hierocratic caste of cultured men."[7] Macdonell is of the view that, "Long before the Ṛgveda, the magician has turned into a priest."[8] He further adds that, "yet even in the earliest period, the sacrificial priest was a

1. Pargiter, op. cit. p. 307.
2. (A.A.), Macdonell, '*Vedic Mythology*', pp. 58;
   (D.D.) Kosambi, *Bhagvān Buddha*, p. 24.
3. Pargiter, op. cit., pp. 307-8.
4. (R.S.) Sharma, '*Śūdras in Ancient India*', pp. 20-21.
5. Pargiter, op. cit., p. 308.
6. Ibid.
7. (Max) Weber, op. cit., p. 29.
8. Hastings, *Encyclopeadia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. VIII, '*Vedic Magic*', pp. 311-21.

magician as well."[1] And that, "It cannot be supposed that even the most advanced minds among the priests regarded prayers and sacrifices as the only means of securing welfare, while rejecting magic, as an effective and reprehensible superstition."[2] But these views are untenable because the Ṛgvedic sacrifice was not magical in character.[3] Deshmukh has discussed the point and says, "Since magic never prevailed among the Indo-Europeans to a great extent, before, at any rate, the rise of religion in the form of belief in and worship of heavenly gods, there did not have to exist a separate class of hereditary magicians."[4] The study of the Ṛgveda reveals that the sages might have possessed the knowledge of the sorcery but this was not the most important part of their knowledge. The full development of sorcery can be seen in the hymns of Atharvaveda, where it was considered as the legitimate weapon of a Brahmin to guard himself against the attacks from others and also to harm the oppressers.

PHYSICAL FEATURES :

(*i*) *Complexion* : Their complexion might not have been light.[5] It is said that the Aryans conquered Dāsas and Dasyus on entering India.[6] The Aryans were fair-skinned but the latter had been dark in complexion[7]. The Aryan gods are frequently represented as destroying dark-hued people[8]. The victory was followed by assimilation. Some non-Aryan priests found their way into the priestly class of the Aryans[9]. Their complexion being dark, we have references to dark-skinned in the Veda. Certain other features, such as flat-nosed or bull-

1. Hastings, Encyclopeadia of Religion and Ethics, vol. VIII, p. 313.
2. Ibid.
3. (K.R.) Potdar, '*Sacrifice in the Ṛgveda*', p. 142.
4. (P.S.) Deshmukh, '*Religion in the Vedic Literature*', p. 157.
5. Kosambi, *JBBRAS, NS*, xxii, p. 35.
6. Sharma (R.S.) *Śudras*, op. cit., pp. 8-9.
7. Ibid, pp. 12-13.
8. Ibid.
9. Kosambi, *JBBRAS, NS*, xxii. p. 35.

lipped could also have been applied to certain of these priests.[1]

As early Brahmins had come from outside India and as they belonged to the Indo-European group, they must have been white in complexion.[2] On entering India, they had to contend with a people who had been dark in colour. After vanquishing the sons of soil, the Aryans allowed assimilation, chiefly by way of marriage. As a result, we come across references to dark-skinned priests. The Ṛgveda mentions certain sages who were of black complexion. The Aśvins are said to have presented fair-skinned women to black (*śyāvāya*) Kaṇva.[3] Kaṇva is also mentioned as a Kṛṣṇa-ṛṣi.[4] Similarly Dīrghatamas was perhaps so named on account of his black colour.[5] In the tenth book of the Ṛgveda, Aṅgirasas are described as dark complexioned.[6]

Thus we find that from rather early times, purity of complexion cannot be vouchsafed for the Brahmins.

(ii) Dress : The use of cloth can be traced as early as the Ṛgveda or even earlier. Words like *vāsas*, *vāsana*, and *vastra* occur quite often in the Vedic literature in the sense of cloth.[7] The *Aryans* wore three garments viz. *nīvi*, *vāsas* and *adivāsa*.[8] They "usually wore lengths of cloth draped around the body and over shoulders and fastened with a belt and pin."[9] '*Nīvi*'[10] was used to cover the lower part of the body while *vāsas* and *adivāsa* were perhaps sheets of cloth by which the upper part of their body was covered.[11] Besides these, both men and women covered the upper part of their bodies with *upavasana* (shawl like thing), *paryāṇahna* (a garment resembling a sheet of cloth), *adivāsa* (a garment worn by a king) and *pratidhi* (a

1. Sharma (R.S.), *Śūdras*, op. cit., p. 12-13.
2. Kosambi, *JBBRAS, NS.*, xxvi., p. 44.
3. *R.V.I.* 117.8.
4. Ibid I.116.23.
5. Ibid. I.158.6. The Śat. Br. XIV. 9.4.15 tells about the case of mother wishing for a black son who possesses the knowledge of the Veda.
6. Kosambi, *JBBRAS, NS*, XXVI, p. 44.
7. Moticandra, *Prācīna Bhāratīya Veśabhuṣā*, p. 15.
8. Ibid. 17.
9. Basham (A.L.), *The Wonder That was India*' (1963), p. 210.
10. Moticandra, op. cit., p. 17-18.
11. Ibid.

garment perhaps worn by ladies for the covering of their breasts).[1] The *Uṣṇīṣa* (turban) was a popular head dress.[2]

"Though all these garments were unstitched, the art of sewing was not unknown."[3] Words like *atka* and *drāpi* were employed for stitched cloths, perhaps for a cloak.[4] The woollen clothes made of sheep-wool were often variegated and sometimes adorned with gold.[5] Among the skins, that of the antelope was very popular as a covering.[6]

(*iii*) *Ornaments* : Ornaments have always been considered and used as beauty aids. Several ornaments are mentioned in the Vedas and the Brāhmaṇas. *Hiraṇya*[7] and *Svarṇa*[8] is frequently mentioned in the Vedic literature. Therefore gold seems to be a very popular metal for the shaping of the ornaments. The use of *rajata*[9] for the making of ornaments is proved by many evidences. The ornaments formed by *ratna*[10] and *Kṛṣṇa*[11] (pearl) were also in vogue. In the Ṛgveda the word *citra*[12] is used for the ornament.

Sraj[13] (garland for the head), *Puṣkara Sraj*[14] (lotus garland), *Stūpa*[15] (a cone like ornament of the head), *Kurīra*[16] (a fan like ornament), *Opaśa*[17] (head ornament of woman), *Śipra*[1] (a head

1. Moticandra, op. cit., 18.
2. Ibid.
3. Basham (A.L.), op. cit., p. 210.
4. Moticandra, op. cit., p. 19.
5. Ibid., p. 10, Macdonell, '*History*', op. cit., p. 136.
6. Moticandra, op. cit., p. 11, *Sat. Br.* 1.4.
7. Ṛ.V. 1.36.4; 1,43,5,122,14, Vāj. Saṁ. XVXIV-50-52; A.V.5.4,5; V. 28,6; Aitareya Br., II,15, Tai. Br. 1.3,7,7; 1,4,7,4. Śat. Br. II, 1,1,5.
8. Ibid VII. 90,6. A.V. XV. 1,2. Śat. Br. XII, 4,4,7; Tai. Br. II. 2,9,7.
9. Ibid VIII, 25,22, Vāj. Saṁ. XXIII, 37, Tai. Saṁ. 1,5,1,2; Śat. Br. XII 4,4,7; Tai. Br. II, 2,9,7.
10. Ibid 1,20,7, A.V. 5,1,7, Śat. Br. V. 3,1,1.
11. Ibid 1,26,4.
12. Ibid 1,17,7.
13. Ibid IV. 38,6, A.V. 1,14,1; Śat. Br. V, 4,5,22.
14. Ibid X. 184, 3, 2; Tāṇḍya Mahā Br. VIII. 9,6; Tai. Br. 1,8,2,23.
15. Ibid. 1,24,7. Tai. Saṁ. III,3,6,5; Śat. Br. 1,3,3,5.
16. Ibid. X, 85,8; Mai. Saṁ. II, 7,5.
17. Ibid 1,73,6; A.V. VI, 138,1; Pañ. Br. XIII,4,3.
18. Ibid V,54,11.

ornament or a crown), *Hiraṇya Śiprā*[1] (gold crown), *Harīśiprā*[1] (gold crown), and *Śṛṅga*[3] are mentioned as the head ornaments in the Ṛgveda alone. In addition to these ornaments the other Saṁhitās and Brāhmaṇas mention *Kumba*[4] (a round crown for men), *Tiriṭa*[5] (tiara), *Svaupaśā*[6] and *sruga*[7] as ornaments worn over the head.

Karṇa śobhana[8] (ear top), *Hiraṇya Karṇa*[9] (*Kuṇḍala*), *Cakra*[10], *Pravarta*[11] (rings overlapping the ears), *Prāvepa*[12] (ear top), *Prākāsa*[13] are referred to as ear-ornaments in the Saṁhitās and in the *Brāhmaṇas*.

Mālā[14], *Niṣka*[15] (necklace), *Rukma*[16] (breast plate), *Atkān*[17] (some time thing worn like *vajñopavīta*) are mentioned as neck ornaments.

Parihasta[18] (a gold bracelet), *Pratisara*[19], *Hiraṇya Bāhu*[20] (armlet of gold), *Hasti*[21], *Khādi*[22], *Vala*[23] were the arm and wrist

1. Ṛ.V. II,54,3.
2. Ibid. X, 96, 4.
3. Ṛ. V. I, 140, 6; A. V. IX. 4, 17.
4. Ibid. VI, 138, 3.
5. Ibid. VIII, 6,7.
6. Tai. Saṁ. IV. 1,5,3.
7. Ait. Br. VI. 18.
8. Ṛ. V. VIII. 78,3.
9. Ibid. I, 122,14.
10. Ibid. X, 85,11,12.
11. A.V. XV. 2. 1.
12. Mai. Saṁ. IV. 4,8.
13. Śat. Br. V. 4,5,22.
14. Ṛ. V. X. 136,2.
15. Ibid. i. 126,2; A. V. V, 14,3; Śat. Br. XI. 4,1,8.
16. Ibid. 1,166,10; Tai. Saṁ. II, 2,2,4; Śat. Br. III, 5,1,20.
17. Ibid.
18. A. V. V. VI, 81,1.
19. A. V.II, 11,2.
20. Vāj. Saṁ. XVI. 17.
21. A. V. III, 22,1.
22. Ṛ.V. 1,168,3. Śat. Br. III,6,1,7.
23. Ait. Br. VI.

ornaments.

Hirāṇya Pāṇi[1] (golden ring) or *Hiraṇya*[2], *Nyocani*[3] (a girdle) or *Varuṇa Pāśa*[4] (a girdle of *muñja*), *Hiraṇya vartani*[5] (girdle of gold), *Raśanā*[6] (girdle), *Patsu Khādi*[7] (anklets) are other ornaments frequently referred to in the Vedic literature.

(*iv*) *Hair-dressing* : The Aryans also paid due attention to the hair style. "The hair was anointed and combed."[8] The Atharvaveda refers to a comb of hundred teeth.[9] Women plaited their hair while men occasionally wore it braided and wound like a shell.[10] We are told that Vasiṣṭhas wore their hair braided on the right side of the head.[11] Men sported garlands on festive occasions.[12] Beards were usually kept but shaving was occasionally practiced.[13]

(*v*) *Language* : The language used by the Rgvedic Aryans in their day to day conversation was identical with the literary language of the Vedas.[14] The Ṛgveda X. 71·1 points out that the first step in education is the cultivation of popular speech, the spoken language or vernacular by which individual objects are named.[15] But this language could only denote the objects and not the perfect knowledge which could be expounded through Vedic learning.[16] According to another passage (X. 71.2), "The learned (*dhīrāh*) meet in their assemblies where through discussions language is refined into the language of the Veda, like groats through a Sieve (*Saktu-*

1. *R*.V, 1.22,5; Vāj. 22.10.
2. Śat. Br. 3,3,2,2.
3. Ibid. X.85.6. A.V. XIV,1,7.
4. Ibid VI. 74,4; A.V. IV,16,6.
5. Ibid V. 75.2.
6. Ibid X. 136.2; Tai. Saṁ. I.1,2,2, Śat. Br. III,3,2,2.
7. Ibid. V. 54,11.
8. Macdonell (A.A.), '*History*', op. cit., p. 138.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid, p. 138; Basham, op. cit., 211.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
14. Mookerji (R.K.), '*Ancient Indian Education*', pp. 31-32.
15. Ibid.
16. Ibid.

miva titaunā punanto)."[1] Still another passages adds that assemblies were held at the sacrifices[2]. At such sacrifices the *ṛṣis* revealed the speech[3]. Thus each *ṛṣi* brought forward his individual contribution to speech and these were collected and codified. "This standardized speech was found suitable for being imparted to pupils and was thus propagated throughout the country."[4] In this way Vedic language developed out of the spoken language.

EDUCATION :

Education helps in the growth of personality. Therefore, proper emphasis is laid on education from a very early period. In the early days of Indian civilization, education was imparted by the *ṛṣi* "who would start by imparting to his son the texts, he had personally studied and which had been the special property of his family."[5] In this way, "Every such family of *ṛṣis* was functioning like a Vedic school."[6] Which may be taken as the school of special knowledge. The student was taught orally through recitation. In the *Muṇḍūka sūkta* of the Ṛgveda a comparison is drawn between the monotonous recitation of words by the teacher and the awakening of frogs exhilarted by the approach of rain.[7]

This hymn, though addressed to the frogs gives a fine picture of the Brahmins, the literary class of the olden times. The frogs sing in the rainy season overwhelmed with joy, and so do the Brahmins who are happy in the rainy season, because this is the time when they are free from their usual routine work and find time for self-study.[8]

The pupils who were called *vratacāris* had to live with the teacher for the sake of education.[9] According to the *Śatapatha*

1. Mookerji (R.K.), '*Ancient Indian Education*', p. 32.
2. Ibid, p. 32.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid, pp. 32-33.
5. Ibid, pp. 32-33.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid. p. 26.
8. *Ṛ.V.* VII. 103.
9. Mookerji (R.K.), op. cit., p. 36, *Ait. Br.* XI. 14; *Śat. Br.* XI. 3.3.2.

Brāhmaṇa, a Brahmin was expected to instruct his own child in both general studies and sacrificial ritual.[1] It records that Varuṇa was the teacher of his son Bhṛgu.[2] But we are told again that a father often preferred to send his son to some famous teacher.[3]

(*i*) *Upanayana* : The ancient educationists have prescribed *brahmacarya* during the period of study. We hear of *brahmacarya* for the first time in the *Atharvaveda*.[4] The *Upanayana* ceremony marked the beginning of the education of the child. It consisted in taking the child to the teacher and in his being accepted as a pupil by him after some formalities. The student was called twice-born as he was considered to be born a second time from the teacher after the *upanayana* ritual.[5]

(*ii*) *Duties of a student* : Begging of alms, tending of fire and cattle and guarding the teacher's house figure among the external duties of a student.[6] He is asked to serve, to abstain from sleep during day-time, to have devotion for the *ācārya* and to study the Veda.[7]

(*iii*) *Status of the teacher* : The teacher was regarded as the spiritual father of the student.[8] In the Atharvaveda he is compared to Yama, Varuṇa, the Sun and the Moon.[9] The *ācārya* is also mentioned as being sustained by the devoted disciple performing faithfully his prescribed duties.[10]

(*iv*) *Institutions* : Apart from the domestic schools there existed, *śākhās*, *caraṇas*, *pariṣads*, *kulas*, *gotras*, institutions for the propagation of learning.[11] Stress was laid on the learning of sacred texts.[12] The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa compares *svādhyāya*

1. Mookerji (R.K.), Education, op. cit., p. 36 *Śat. Br.* i.6.2.4.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid, *Education*, op. cit., p. 67.
5. *A. V.* XI. 5; *Sat. Br.* XI. 5. 4.
6. Mookerji (R.K.), *Education*, op. cit., p. 93.
7. *Śat. Br.* XI, 5.4.5.
8. *A.V.* XI. 5.3.
9. Mookerji (R.K.), *Education*, op. cit., p. 68.
10. Ibid, p. 68.
11. Ibid, *Education* op. cit., p. 77.
12. Ibid, p. 88.

to a sacrifice through which one gains the heaven.[1]

At the end of the studentship, normally fixed at twelve years, the teacher received his fee (*dakṣiṇā*).[2]

THE HOUSEHOLDER :

(*i*) *Marriage* : As regards marriage the Ṛgveda does not lay down any hard and fast rule. If there was any restriction on marrying, that was probably of the simplest kind. There is no mention of the *gotra* or *pravara* system in the Ṛgveda in regard to marriage. It is quite possible that when the Aryans conquered the aborigines of this country, some of them, if not all, might have married the aboriginal women[3] and they might have even taken a number of them as *Dāsīs*. A number of stories recorded in the Brāhmaṇas suggest that the priests and the Kṣatriyas were free to intermarry with lower classes including the Śūdras. The marriage of a Brahmin with the daughter of a king is seen in the case of Sukanyā, the daughter of Śaryāta[4], who married the seer Cyavana. The *ṛṣi* Śyāvāśva is also said to have married the daughter of king Rathavīti.[5] The king Asaṅga had a wife, a lady of the Aṅgiras family.[6] A passage states that a king named Trasadasyu gave fifty slave girls as concubines to the sage Śobhari Kaṇva.[7] This indicates that the priests also used to keep concubines. The cases of Vatsa and Kavaṣa[8] indicate that the Brahmins married even the Śūdra girls. Both of these ṛṣis were taunted as the sons of a Śūdra woman and that of a slave girl respectively. But they proved their Brahminhood by walking through

1. Mookerji, *Education*, op. cit., p. 88, *Śat. Br.* XI. 5.6.3.
2. Ibid, 92.
3. Chanana (D.R.), '*Slavery in Ancient India*', pp. 19-21.
4. *Śat. Br.* 4.1.5.7; Hopkins, *J.A.O.S.* Vol. XIII, pp. 352-53; Narmadeshwar Prasad, *The Myth of The Caste System*, p. 61.
5. *Bṛhaddevtā*. 5.50 see commentary on R.V. V. 61.
6. *R.V.* VIII. 1.34.
7. Ibid, 19.36.
8. Keith, CHI, i.112.

fire unscathed.[1] This shows that the social rank of a man was not determined by his birth but by his worth[2] although the purity of descent was also appreciated.[3] Instances of the legal marriage of a slave girl with a *ṛṣi* can be had in the story of the slave girl Uśij[4] the mother of *ṛṣi* Dīrghatamas, given in the Bṛhaddevatā.[5] The *Arharvaveda* declaes : "Even if ten non-Brahmins had previously married a woman and then the Brahmin takes her by the hand, he alone is to be her husband, only he the Brahmin and not a Vaiśya, nor a Rājanya is her lord."[6] This no doubt gives a special right to a Brahmin and this is why in later period the Brahmin's social status was very high in the society. Thus, though we have a number of references about the marriages between the Brahmins and Kṣrtriyas yet there is complete silence about the marriages of Brahmin or Kṣatriya women with Vaiśya or Śūdra men.

(*ii*) *Entertainment* : The lives of Vedic Indians were not devoid of entertainment. They appreciated its worth. They were aware of diverting themselves after a hard day's work and of its danger, if carried to excess.

Chariot racing, dicing, dancing, playing on instruments and singing were chief means of recreation.[7] The chariot-race was a favourite amusement.[8] A whole sukta of the Ṛgveda is devoted to gambling.[9] Dancing was indulged in by both men and women.[10] The goddess of Dawn is compared to a dancer decked in gay attire.[11] The Rgveda refers to three musical instruments viz. drum (*dundubhi*), the flute (*vāṇa*)[12] and lute (*vīṇā*). Singing is very frequently mentioned in the

1. *Pañ Br.* 14.6,6.
2. Ibid.
3. Macdonell and Keith, *Vedic Index*, Vol. II, p. 259.
4. *Pañ Br.* 14.11.17.
5. Macdonell and Keith, *Vedic Index*, Vol. II.259.
6. *A.V.* 17.9.
7. Macdonell (A.A.), '*History*', op. cit., p. 142.
8. Macdonell (A.A.), '*History*' op. cit., p. 142.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.

Ṛgveda.[1]

People were also entertained with food and drinks at the sacrifices and festivals. The Vedas and the Brāhmaṇas frequently talk about various rituals.

(*iii*) *Food*: Barley, rice, wheat, milk were among the principal ingredients of the food of the Vedic people. Barley is frequently mentioned in the Ṛgveda[2] and other Saṁhitās.[3] But rice[4] and wheat[5] are not referred to in the Ṛgveda, though named in the later Saṁhitās.[6] Cakes and meals mixed with curds or butter were offered to the gods.[7] Milk[8] was the regular food of the people. The mention of meat is also made in the Ṛgveda[9] and other Saṁhitās.[10] One verse describes the fire as the eater of oxen and barren cows.[11] At another place gods are said to be engaged in cooking or eating a number of buffaloes.[12] 'The ritual offerings,' says Om Prakash, "of flesh implied that the priests would eat it."[13] The killing of a big ox or a big goat or even a cow that miscarried or a sterile cow, in honour of a guest[14], was not unknown to the people. It was customary to feed the guests with the flesh of animals. Thus "many animals, cows, sheep, goats and horses continued to killed at sacrifices and the flesh of these sacrificed animals was eaten by the participants."[15] But it is quite evident that during the later Vedic period, the eating of meat and especially of beef was not

1. Ibid.
2. *ṚV.* 1.23.15 : 1.117.21.
3. *AV.* VIII.7.20.
4. Sukthankar (V.S.), *Ghate's Lectures on Ṛgveda*, p. 164.
5. Om Prakash : *Food and Drinks in Ancient India*, p. 9.
6. *AV.* VIII. 7,20; *Vāj Saṁ.* XVIII. 12, XIX. 22.89; XXI. 29; *Śat Br.* XII. 7.1.2; 7.2.9.
7. *ṚV.* III. 52.7; VI. 57.2.
8. *ṚV.* I. 164.7; VIII. 2.9., I. 153.4; I. 121.5; VI. 52.10.
9. *ṚV.* I. 161.10, V. 29.7; VIII. 12.8.
10. *Mait. Saṁ.* III.14., *Vāj. Saṁ.* XIII. 47-51; *Tai Saṁ.* IV. 2.10.1-4, *Pañca. Br.* XXI. 14.5; *Ait. Br.* VI.8. *Sat. Br.* IX. 7.1.3.
11. *ṚV.* VIII. 43.11.
12. Ibid. 66.10.
13. Om Prakash : op. cit., p. 15.
14. *AV.* III. 21.6, *Tai Saṁ.* I. 3.14.7; *AV.* XII. 4.10; *Śat. Br.* III.4.1.2.
15. Om Prakash : op. cit. 16.

considered good.[1] The Atharvaveda counts the eating of cow's flesh among sins against one's forefathers.[2] The same source says that a person who relishes beef will have his progeny taken away by Bṛhaspati.[3] The Atharvaveda and the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa say that those who observed the vow, generally abstained from meat diet.[4] The Brahmins perhaps took only meat of sacrificad animals and that too of pure ones.[5]

(*iv*) *Drinks* : Three kinds of drinks are mentioned in the Saṁhitās and the Brāhmaṇas viz. *soma*[6], *surā*[7], *pariśruta*.[8] Out of these three drinks the Brahmins are always attached to the soma.[9] They are sometimes represented as the pressers of soma[10], sometimes as the drinkers of soma and sometimes as the subjects of soma.[11] The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* declares, "Truely the soma-juice is the Brahmin food...."[12] This soma-juice was mixed with milk, curd and barley-grains.[13] The taste of the soma-juice was 'sweet and delicious'[14] as is indicated by Vedic hymns.[15] At many places soma is said to be the bestower of the power of eloquence, and immortality and also purity.[16] It was considered no less than the 'heavenly nectar'.[17] The Ṛgveda[18] also mentions the "strong mixture of soma juice called *Pañcadaśa*"[19].

1. Om Prakash, op. cit., p. 18.
2. *AV.* V.19.5.
3. Ibid. VII. 438.
4. *AV.* VI. 70.1., *Sat. Br.* XIV. 1.1.29.
5. *Śat. Br.* II. 2.1.39; XII. 1.2.39.
6. *Śat. Br.* 12.7,2,2; *Ait Br.* 7.29., *Kā. Saṁ.* II.5; *Vāj Saṁ.* 9.40; 10.18.
7. Ibid 12.8, 1.5.
8. Ibid 1,2,3,9; 7.5,2,37; *Ait. Br.* 2.8.
9. Ibid 12.7,2.2; *Ait. Br.* 7.29; *Sat. Br.* 4.2.4.9.
10. *Adhvaryu, potā.* and *grāvagrabh* were mainly associated with the pressing of Soma. See Potdar, op. cit., 163-67.
11. *Śat Br.* 5.3.3.12.
12. Ibid. 12.7,2,2.
13. Macdonell and Keith, *Vedic Index*, Vol. II, p. 477.
14. Om Prakash, op. cit., p. 24.
15. Ibid.
16. Ibid, (Ṛ.V. VI,47,3; IX. 96.5; RV VIII. 48,12).
17. Ibid (Ṛ.V. IX. 110.8).
18. *Ṛ.V.* X. 27.7.
19. Om Prakash, op. cit., p. 24

As we have mentioned before, *surā* was another drink which was made "from fermented barley or wild paddy after distillation".[1] But its drinking was never commended like *soma*.[2] Thus "the drinking of *surā* gave rise to broils in the assembly".[3] The very fact that "it is mentioned as a reward for the performance of sacrifice[4] in the Atharvaveda[5] and praised in the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa"[6], proves that it was quite popular in the later Vedic period. On the basis of the evidence of the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa that the vassel of *Surā* is in the hand of the king, Dr. Om Prakash concludes that the Kṣatriyas were generally in the habit of drinking *Surā*.[7] The Brahmins being well aware of the inclusion of the drinking in the "seven sins forbidden by the Vedas[8] and in the class of "anger, senselessness and dicing"[9], "avoided drinking".[10] The Aitareya Brāhmaṇa describes soma-juice as a proper drink fit for the Brahmins, curd for the Vaiśyas, water for the Śūdras and a juice extracted from the roots of *Nyagrodha* and the fruits of *Udumbara Aśvattha* and *Plākṣa* for the Kṣatriyas.[11] May be, different drinks were popular among different varṇas.[12] But it can also be a symbolic description of some mystic statement.

(*v*) *Certain Beliefs* : In order to import more sanctity to the *Varṇa* system, the Brāhmaṇas extended this even to the gods. The Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa[13] divides gods into four *Varṇas* viz. Agni, Bṛhaspati etc. as Brahmins (as both of them were considered priests of the gods), Indra, *Varuṇa* and Soma, as kings (as they were regarded as kings of gods, men and the Brahmins), Rudra, Āditya and Vaiśvedevas as Vaiśyas and

1. Om Prakash, op. cit., p. 25.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. *A.V.*, IV. 34.6.
6. Om Prakash : op. cit., 25 (*Ait. Br.* XXXVII. 4).
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid (*RV.* X.5.6.).
9. Ibid (*RV.* VII. 86.6.).
10. Ibid. (*Kāth. Saṁ.* XIII. 2.).
11. *Ait. Br.* VII. 29.
12. Om Prakash : op. cit., 30.
13. *Tai. Br.* 3.5; 2.2.9-1.

Pūṣan etc. as Śūdras. The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa[1] also classified them into four well known *Varṇas.*

Not only are the gods divided into *Varṇas*, even the metres are classified aceording to the *Varṇas*. Thus the *Gāyatrī* metre belongs to the Brahmin, *Triṣṭubh* to the Rājanya and *Jagatī* to the Vaiśya. In both these classifications, i.e. of the metre and the gods, Dr. Mangaldeva finds the instance of close relationship existing between the Brahmins, the Kṣatriyas and the Vaiśyas at every step[2].

DUTIES OF THE BRAHMINS

The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa[3] enumerates the Brahmancial descent, befitting deportment, fame and prefecting of the people, as the duties of the Brahmins.

(*i*) *Ensuring pure Descent* : The Vedas attach much importance to the purity of descent. That is why the Taittirīya Saṁhitā[4] lays stress on the need of becoming the scion of a saga (*ārṣeya*). In the Pañchaviṁśa Brāhmaṇa[5] Vatsa is said to have passed a fire ordeal to prove his pure descent.[6] But it also indicates that sometimes the knowledge of a person was given more importance than purity of his descent.[7] Studentship, for example, could be accorded without any enquiry into the varṇa of the student.[8] In the Brāhmaṇas of the Ṛgveda,[9] Kavaṣa is described as the son of a slave girl. Therefore lists of *pravaras*, enumerating the ancestory of the *purohitas*, could not have had much importance, though in many places in the sacraments, the knowledge of one or more ancestors was consi-

1. *Śat. Br.* 1.3.3.19; 2.5.2.6; 5.5.2.27; 2.5.4.8.
   ब्रह्माग्निः क्षत्रं वै वरुणो विशो मरुतः क्षत्रं वा
   इन्द्रो विशो मरुतः ब्रह्मा वा अग्निः क्षत्रमिन्द्रः ।
2. Mangaldeva Śāstri, Bhāratīya Sanskriti kā Vikāsa, Vol I. pp. 162-63.
3. *Śāt. Br.* II. 5.7.1.
4. Tai. Saṁ. 6.6.1.4; See also *Vāj Saṁ.* 7.46; *Tai. Br.* 1.4.4.2; *Śat. Br.* 4.3,4,19; 12.4.4.6.
5. Max-Muller, *Ancient Sanskrit Literature*, p. 380.
6. *Tai Saṁ.* 2.1.5.5., *Kāth. Saṁ.* 13.5.
7. *Tai. Saṁ.* 6.6.1.4.; *Kāthaka Saṁ.* 30.1; *Mai Saṁ.* 4.8.1.,
8. *Śat. Br.* 11.5.4.1.
9. *Ait Br.* 2.19; *Kau. Br.* 12.3.

dered essential. At the Vājapeya[1] sacrifice a priest was allowed to partake soma draught only when he proved that his ten ancestors had partaken of it in ancient times.

(*ii*) *Good conduct* : Good conduct was considered as the essential requisite of a Brahmin.[2] According to the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, they should be merciful[3], kind to all.[4] They should also perform sacrifices and give and accept alms.[5] They should speak the truth.[6] Thus the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa states that the Śyāparṇas were dismissed from service by Viśvantara on account of their telling a lie.[7]

(*iii*) *Study of the Vedas* : Study of the Vedas alongwith other subsidiary works was considered as the most essential duty of the Brahmins.[8] The knowledge of the Vedas was not restricted to the Brahmins but men of other higher castes could also acquire this knowledge.[9] The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa refers to certain kings who were well-versed in the knowledge of the Brahman and the Vedas and even the Brahmins approached them for the sake of the same knowledge.[10] The Kaṭha Saṁhitā enjoins the study of the Vedas upon all the men since it speaks of a person, not a Brahmin, having studied (Vedic) lore and yet not shining by his learning.[11] The Vedic texts have described many rites which could confer the spiritual lustre on the Brahmins who perform them.[12] The Taittirīya Saṁhitā and the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa lay stress on the study of the sacred works[4]. The term *Svādhyāya* is used for the study. The Śatapatha

1. *Śat. Br.* 5,4,5,4.
2. Max Muller : op. cit., pp. 407.
3. *Śat. Br.* 2.3.2.12.
4. Ibid. 2.3.4.6.
5. Ibid. 13.1,5,6.
6. Ibid. 3.2,1,24; 4,1,3,17; *Kāṭh. Saṁ.* 14-5; 37.2; *Vāj. Saṁhitā* . 23.62
7. *Ait. Br.* 7.27,3,4; Muir : op. cit., Vol. I, p. 438.
8. *Tai Saṁ.* 4.1,7,1; 7.5,18,1; *Kāṭh. Saṁ. Aśvamedha* 5.14; *Vāj. Saṁ.*, 22.22; 27.2; *Tai. Br.* 3.8.13; *Ait. Br.* 4.11,69; *Śat. Br.* 13.2.6,10; 10,3,5,16; 11.4,4,1; *Pañ. Br.* 6,3,5.
9. *Śat. Br.* 2.1,3,6; 13.1.5,3; 5.2.6,9.
10. *Śat. Br.* 11.6.21.5; *Yājñavalkya* learnt from Janaka.
11. *Kaṭh. Saṁhitā.* 11.16.
12. *Kaṭh. Saṁhitā* 37.7, *Tai. Br.* 2.7,1,1; *Pañ. Br.* 23,7,3; *Śat. Br* 2,3,1,31.
13. *Śat. Br.* 1.7,2,3; 11.3,3-6; 5,7,10.

Brāhmaṇa[1] describes the virtues of *Svādhyāya* in detail. It says that the study of the Vedas is the source of great joy to a learned śrotriya. He becomes ready minded and independent of others and that he acquires wealth day by day. He sleeps peacefully; he is the best physician for himself and peculiar to him are restraint of the senses, delights, in the one thing, growth of intelligence, fame and the task of perfecting the people. Therefore it was his sacred duty to acquire the knowledge of the three Vedas.[2] Those men (Brahmins or others) who had acquired such knowledge were designated as *Tṛi-śukriya* or *Tṛi Śukra*.[3] *Itihāsa, Purāṇa, Gāthā, Nārāśaṁśī, Brhmodya, Anuśāsana*[4], *Anvyākhyāna*[5] *Kalpa, Brāhmaṇa Vidyā, Kṣatra Vidyā, Devajanavidyā, Nakṣatra. Vidyā, Bhūta Vidyā, Sarpa Vidyā, Atharvāṇgiras Vidyā, Daiva, Nidhi, pitrya, Rāśi, Sūtra* etc. are enumerated among the subjects for study.[6]

The superiority of the Vedic knowledge to all other knowledges is declared by Sāyaṇa who says, "The Veda expounds the truth about gods, *dharma* and *Para-brahma*. He who does not recite the Veda but only utters secular speech full of slander, falsehood and strife cannot have access to true knowledge."[7] Here the Veda includes the vedanta if not the Dharmaśāstra also.

Thus the study of the Vedic texts made the Brahmins worthy of gifts which were offered by the kings like Janaka[8] and Ajātaśatru and others. In certain cases women were also said to have possessed of the sacred knowledge.

ASSEMBLIES :

The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa declares that at the time of the big

1. *Śat. Br.* 11.5,6,3.9; 7,1; *Tai. Br.* 2.13.
2. Ibid 1.1.4,2.3; 2.6,42-7; 4.6,7,1.2; 5.5,5,9; 6.3.1,10.11.20; 10.5,2,1,2; 11.5,4 18; 12.3,3,2. 11.5,6,3.
3. *Kaṭh. Saṁ.* 37.7.
4. *Tai Br.* 2.7, 1,2.
5. *Śat. Br.* 11,5,7,5-8; *Ait. Ar.* 2.9.10.
6. Sāyaṇa's Introduction to Ṛgveda Commentary.
7. *Śat. Br.* 11.4.1.1 .
8. *Ait. Br.* 5.29; *Kau. Br.* 2.9.

sacrifices viz. *Dāśarātra*[1] and *Aśvamedna*,[2] etc. the learned Brahmins were invited. They used to hold discussions on different subjects. One who outshone in these learned assemblies was given the tittle of *Kavi* or *Vipra*[3]. Thus we see that certain Brahmins were engaged in intellectual pursuits. A particular type of discussion was called *Brahmodya* or *Brahma-Vādya* or *Brahma-Vādyā*, wherein generally philosophical matters were discussed. We learn from the Ṛgveda[4] that there were some learned assemblies where Brahmins united in fellowship in Vedic learning (*Sakhyaḥ*) come together (*saṁyajante*) for the purpose of developing further the truths, they had realized in their hearts (*hrdā taṣtheṣu*) or reached by their mind (*manasojaveṣu*). Sāyaṇa calls these learned assemblies *Brāhmaṇa-Saṁghas*. From such assemblies, the ignorant were kept away. It also condemns those who are not fit to move with the Brahmins as being fit only for the plough or the loom.[5]

During the period of the later *Saṁhitās* and Brāhmaṇas we do not often hear of *vidatha*, an assembly.[6] It is said that Agni, the chief priest was elected in a *vidatha*.[7] But the presence of the priest (*hotā*) in the *vidatha* does not prove that the priests or Brahmins as a class[8] were associated with it. It is obvious that the rājanyas or Brahmins hardly act as the members of the *vidatha* as they do in the case of the *sabhā* and *samiti*[9].

1. *Śat. Br.* 13.5.2.11.
2. *Śat. Br.* 4.6,9,20.
3. *Tai. Saṁ.* 2.5,9,1; *Tai. Br.* 3.5,3,1; *Śat. Br.* 1.4,2,7; 3.5,3,12.
4. *Ṛ.V.* X. 71.8.
5. Ibid X. 71.9.
6. Sharma (R.S.), *Aspects of Political Ideas and Institutions in Ancient India*, pp. 61-80.
   "There are about half a dozen views regarding the meaning and interpretation of the word *Vidatha*. Since the word can be derived from the root vid, which means respectively to know, to possess, to consider and to exist, it is possible to ascribe the meaning of knowledge, possession (or house according to Bloomfield) and assembly to it". See also Macdonell and Keith, *Vedic Index*, ii.296.
7. Sharma (R.S.), *Aspects of Political Ideas and Institutions in Ancient India*, p. 78.
8. Ibid, 77-78.
9. Ibid, 78.

Ludwig[1] thinks that it was an assembly especially of the *maghavans* (rich men) and Brahmins. But this cannot be accepted for want of evidence. References reveal that it was a form of the "earliest folk-assembly of the Indo-Aryans attended both by men and women performing all kinds of functions, economic, military, religious and social".[2]

Besides the *Vidatha*, there existed in the Vedic period, *Samiti*, *Sabhā Pariṣad*. But their meanings are uncertain. Most probably *sabhā* meant "assembly" of the Vedic Indians as well as the "hall" where they met in assembly.[3] Ludwig opines that *Sabhā* was exclusively an assembly of the Brahmins and the *Maghavans* (rich patrons).[4] The words *sabhya* (worthy of the assembly), applied to a Brahmin and *rayih sabhāvān* wealth fitting for the assembly", seems to support the contention of Ludwig.[5] Again Bloomfield asserts that *Sabhā* refers to a house and not to an assembly,[6] while Zimmer calls it the "Village Council".[7] According to Hillebrandt there is no difference between *Sabhā* and *Samiti*.[8]

Samiti according to Macdonell and Keith means an assembly of the Vedic tribe.[9] Ludwig differentiates the *Samiti* from *Sabhā* by saying that it included all the people, primarily the viśaḥ subjects but also the *Maghavans* and Brahmins, if they desired, although *Sabhā* was their special assembly".[10] But this is not accepted by other scholars. Hillebrandt says that "*Samiti* and *Sabhā* are much the same, the one being the assembly, the other primarily the place of the assemblies".[11]

(*iv*) *Performing of the sacrifices* : It was also the duty of a Brahmin to perform sacrifices for his own welfare and for that

1. Ludwig quoted by Macdonell and Keith in *Vedic Index*, ii.296.
2. Sharma (R.S) '*Aspects*', op. cit., p. 79.
3. Macdonell and Kteih, Vedic Index Vol. II, p. 426.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid op. cit., Vol. II, pp.426-27
6. Ibid, p. 427.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid., p.430.
10. Ibid., p.439-31.
11. Ibid.

of his family as it was believed that the gods are pleased through sacrifices. And the gods if propitiated, bestow wealth, cattle, health, children and victory on the devotee. In the Ṛgveda itself one can find numerous prayers which are made for the sake of these things[2]. In the great mass of data available regarding the performance of sacrifices in the Vedic period there is no evidence of a sacrifice being restricted to a particular Varṇa[3]. Members of all the three higher *Varṇas* were free to perform. them. Thus the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* says that the gods do not talk with everybody. They talk only with Brahmins, the Kṣatriyas and the Vaiśyas for they are the *Yājñiyas* (who have the right to perform a sacrifice)[4]. Probably even out here very few could afford to undertake such a performance as it needed much wealth[5], including the costly *dakṣinā* prescribed for the officiating priests. Hence the Vedic sacrifices were sometimes called *Dravya yajñas* (wealth sacrifices)[6]. Of course, the less affluent could perform the smaller, the not so costly sacrifices where they engaged Brahmin priests, if they were not Brahmins themselves[1]. In this way we see that a Brahmin was one of those fortunate persons who had the sole right of performing the sacrifices if they desired.

GAINFUL OCCUPATIONS :

(*i*) *Teaching* : The duty of the Brahmin was not only to acquire knowledge but also to impart the same to worthy pupils. Hence

1. R.V. VII. 1.5,13,24; 8.6; 15.4,9; 16.9,10; 82.7.
2. Ibid. "Offerings", says Poddar, "can be said to be symbolic of what the people think about themselves and their divinities and the changing moods of social organism can be reflected in their ideas about the offerings in the sacrifice. The hymns, while praising the gods for their greatness and glory, also serve the purpose of recommending the offerings for their acceptance. In fact the acceptance of sacrifice by the gods is the acceptance of the offerings, offered therein."
   '*Sacrifice in the Ṛgveda*', by K. R. Potdar, p.95.
3. Macdonell and Keith : op. cit., VI. Vol. II, pp. 89-90.
4. *Śat. Br.* 3.1.1.9-10.
5. Sukthankar (Y.S.), op. cit., p. 126.
6. Mangala Deva *Śāstri*, op. cit., p. 168.
7. Macdonell and Keith, op. cit., VI. Vol. II, p. 89.

he occupied the important position of the teacher (*guru*) in the society.[1] The Atharvaveda equates the teacher with Yama, Varuṇa, Sun and the Moon.[2] That the teaching of the Vedic literature was almost universally in the hands of the Brahmins is clearly indicated in the Brāhmaṇa literature.[3] Though certain non-Brahmin teachers are referred to in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa[4], yet they were not held in high esteem[5] as teaching was not recognised as their legitimate function. For instance Janaka, Pravāhaṇa Jaivāli, Dripta, all Kṣatriyas acted as the teachers of Yājñavalkya, Śvetaketu and Bālāki respectively.[6] Mocdonell and Keith do not attach much significance to these cases for "the priests would naturally represent their patrons as interested in their sacred lore. It is thus not necessary to see in these notices any real and independent study on the part of Kṣatriyas".[7]

Perhaps education was imparted by the Brahmin teachers to their sons at homes.[8] This instruction comprised the sacred lore and the science of ritual.[9] Knowledge was thus prssed on from father to son as is indicated by the lists of teacher-families found in the Vaṁśa Brāhmaṇa of the Sāmaveda, and in the Śāṅkhāyana Āraṇyaka.[10] The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa however indicates that the father also used to send his son to famous teachers for education;[11] such teachers being free to accept any number of students.[12] He was expected to impart his full knowledge to them.[13] The same source mentions a student named

1. Macdonell and Keith, op. cit. VI. Vol. II, p.88.
2. *A.V.* 11.5.
3. Kane (PIV.), '*History of Dharma Śāstra*', Vol. II, pt. I, p. 108.
4. *Śat. Br.* 8.1.4.10; 9.6.2.5.3.7; 14.9.1.1; 10.6.1.
5. Mookerji (R.K.), *Education*, op. cit., p. 105.
6. *Śat. Br.* 11.6.2; 14.9.1.1.
7. Mackdonell and Keith, op. cit., VI. Vol. II, p. 88.
8. *Śat. Br.* 1.6.2.4, Here Varuṇa is described as the teacher of his son Bhṛgu.
9. Ibid.
10. *Weber's Indischien Studien* p. 4.376 Quoted by Macdonell and Keith in *Vedic Index*, Vol. II, p. 88.
11. *Śat. Br.* 11.4,1,9.
12. *Tai. Ār.* 7.3.
13. Ibid. 7.4.

Uddālaka approaching his teacher with *samits* and begging for acceptance as a pupil[1]. About the *Upanayana* we read, "The *ācārya* places his right hand upon the head of the pupil, thus symbolising the imparting of the very core of his personality to the pupil; and on the third night, such personal inner splendour (*garbha*) of the teacher is supposed to enter the very core of the pupil's whole being, thereafter the pupil becomes a true Brahmin, on being taught the *Sāvitrī Mantra*[2] The Ṛgveda shows that instruction was oral and consisted of the pupil's repeating of the words uttered by the teacher[3]. At the time of the initiation ceremony the student was asked to beg alms. Thus Śatapatha *Brāhmaṇa* says, "Having made himself humble, as it were, and having become devoid of shame, he begs alms"[4]. In the ancient Indian Educational system the *ācārya* was considered as the spiritual father of the pupil[5]. The student lived with him in his house or hermitage[6]. As soon as the student joined the teacher, the latter used to tell him his duties with these words, "You are a *Brahmacārin*; do the service, do not sleep in day time; with devotion to the ācārya study the Vedas[7]. The Taittirīya Āraṇyaka lays down that the teacher must teach with all his heart and soul[8]. According to the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa he is bound to reveal everything to his pupil who at any rate

1. *Śat. Br.* 11.4,1,9. According to the A.V. 11.5, the studentship starts with the initiation ceremony i.e. *Upanayana*, performed by the teacher (*Ācārya*). This ceremony lasts for three days during which the teacher imparts new birth to him whence he emerges as a *dvija* (twice-born). This first birth he owes to his parents who give him only his body. It is a mere physical birth. His second bith is spiritual. After this he becomes a *Brahmacārī*.
2. *Śat Br.* 9.5.4,12; XI, 5.4.
3. *R.V.* 7.103.5. "यदेषामन्यो अन्यस्य वाचं शाक्तस्येव वदति शिक्षमाण: ।"
4. *Śat. Br.* 3,3.5 (Tr. by J. Eggeling).
   Mookerji says "in the *Ṛgveda* can be seen the glimpses, of an educational system which comprised the small domestic school run by the teacher who admitted to his instruction resident pupils".
   See Mookerji's '*Education*', op. cit., p. 36.
5. *A.V.* xi.5,3; *Ait Br.* i.1.
6. *Śat. Br.* 9,4,1.9.
7. Ibid. 9.5,4,5.
8. *Taitt. Āraṇyaka*, VII, 4.

lived with him for one whole year.[1] The teacher was also expected to refresh his knowledge from time to time, and "try to maintain high standards in respect of his own academic attainments".[2] He was not allowed to impart instruction in the subject with which he was not fully conversant. A story of the Gopatha Brāhmaṇa shows that a certain teacher named Maitreya closed his seminar and dismissed his students as soon as he discovered that he was not conversant with a particularsubject.[3]

Thus, it was the sacred duty of the teacher "to help to cultivate the moral culture of his pupil along with his intellectual culture".[4]

Besides these regular teachers, we are confronted with wandering teachers (*carakas*) in the Brāhmaṇas. Though they were by no means regarded as competent, they did impart some knowledge.[5] In this context, the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa[6] relates the story of a Kuru Pāñcāla Brahmin named Uddālaka Āruṇi, who went to North where he offered a gold coin as a prize "for the sake of calling out to a timid disputation." Seized with fear the Brahmins of the North challanged him to disputation on spiritual matters with Svaidāyana Śaunaka as their champion. In the end Uddlāka found himself unable to answer the questions put to him by the sage Śaunaka, "gave him the gold coin", and became his pupil to study those questions. "Such discussions were also encouraged and organised by the more intelluctual and spiritually-minded kings".[7] For instance Janaka, king of Videha, having come across some travelling Brahmins, arranged a discussion with them at the *Agnihotra,* as a result whereof he made liberal gifts to the most successful of the disputants.[8]

This leads to the conclusion that in the Brahmanic times, "The Brahmins were the real intellectual leaders controlling

1. *Śat. Br.* xiv, 1.1.26,27.
2. Valavalnar (P.N.H.) "*Hindu Social Institutions*", p. 115-16.
3. *Gopatha. Br.* i,1.31.
4. Vaļvalkar (P.N.H.) : op. cit., p. 135.
5. *Śat. Br.* 4.2.4.1.
6. Ibid. 11.4.1.1.f.
7. Mookerji (R.K.), *Education*, op. cit., 117.
8. *Śat. Br.* 11.6.2.1.

education. We must assume among them a very stirring intellectual life which really accounts for the supremacy established and exercised by them over the rest of the people. Wide was the scope of their intellectual interests and activities; it embraced the whole range of Brahmanical theology, extending in like manner to the question of worship, dogma, and philosophical speculations, all were closly interwoven with each other"[1].

(*ii*) *Working as Priests* : In later times the Brahmins had the sole right of officiating at the sacrifices[2]. Thus the priests were always recruited from among them. But no such indication is given by the hymns of the Ṛgveda[3]. The institution of priesthood has a history behind it. Some scholars trace this institution back to the times of the unseparated Indo-Aryans as almost all the Indo-Aryan peoples have similar institutions[4]. And when an offshoot of these people came to India they would have brought the institution along with, everyone being in a position to act as the priest. Due to development of the society, the priesthood came to be a specialised craft[5]. Probably the non-Aryan priests were also absorbed in the new body[6]. But as pointed out elsewhere[7] this would create a difficulty in explaining the existence of the priesthood among Indo-Aryan peoples.

According to Weber the Brahmins were magicians[8]. This statement presupposes the non-Aryan origin of the institution of Priesthood. But this statement is only partially true because in the earlier part of the Ṛgveda we do not find sorcery in a very developed form,[9] though the priest did have some knowledge of the magical spells; "For though the sphere of the Vedic ritual was different from that of regular magical rites, it is impossible to draw a distinct line of demar-

1. Mookerji (R.K.), *Education*, op. cit., p. 155.
2. Dutt (N.K.) : *Origin and Growth of Caste in India*, p. p. 88-89.
3. The instance of *Devāpī* who though a politician proves that the priests were recruited from other castes also. *Ṛ.V.* X.98,5. See also '*The Indian Caste-system*'; Bhandarkar's complete works, Vol. II, p. 471.
4. Rapson : op. cit., p. 111.
5. Mangal Deva Sastari : '*Bhārtīya*', op. cit., p. 98.
6. Kosambi, *JBBRAS, NS.* xxii.35.
7. Infra, pp. 28-29.
8. Max Weber, op. cit., p. 29.
9. Macdonell, '*History*', op. cit., p. 159.

cation between sacrifice and sorcery in the Vedic religion of which witchcraft is in fact, an essential element"[1]. The very existence of the Brahmin priest possessing the knowledge of the Atharva-veda, who rectifies the mistakes committed by other priests during the performance of the sacrifice, proves the above notion[2].

As there was a close relationship between prayers and sacrifices, it may be said that those who composed the hymns and officiated at the sacrifices developed into a class of Brahmins by the end of the period of the Ṛgveda[3]. The Ṛgveda refers to the two jobs i.e. to the same poet-priest as composing of hymns[4] and as officiating at sacrifices[5]. It also mentions the choice of a Brahmin for some rite[6]. Hillebrandt says that the poets were not necessarily the priests. But apparently the priests were not professionals[7]. That a large number of people had adopted sacrificial performances as their means of subsistence is indicated by the family tradition. But there is no evidence to prove that specific duties were assigned and carried out by a certain group of persons who could thus be designated as professionals[8]. Hillebrandt[9] is of the opinion that the Ṛgvedic ritual was a well developed one as the Ṛgveda refers to well-marked duties of different categories of priests in the Ṛgveda II. 20.3. Macdonell also says, "Even in the period of the Ṛgveda, there already existed a priestly class, qualified by special knowledge and magical qualities to act for others in difficult and dangerous intercourse of men with gods and spirits"[10]. But the views of both Hillebrandt and Mac-

1. Macdonell, History. op. cit., p. 161.
2. Macdonell and Keith, op. cit., VI. Vol. II, p. 78;8.
3. Potdar (K.R.), op. cit., p. 140.
4. *R.V.* 1.64-45.
5. Ibid 1.15.5; II. 36.5; VI. 75.10; VII. 103.1,7,8.
6. Ibid VII. 58.1 '*Yo anucānobrāhmaṇo yukta asit, kasvit tatra yajamānasya samvit*' quoted by Potdar; Sacrifice in The Ṛgveda, p. 141, See also R.V. X. 71,7,9,99,19.
7. Hillebrandt quoted by Potdar : *Sacrifice in the Ṛgveda*, p. 150.
8. Potdar (K.R.), op. cit., pp. 159-60.
9. Hillebrandt, '*Vedische Mythologie*', Vol. I, p. 11.
10. '*Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*', Ed. by Hastings, Vol. XII, p. 610; X.pp. 311-13; *Aitreya Brāhmaṇa Introduction*, pp. 17-22. Also

donell are not convincing, because if we accept that the Ṛgvedic ritual was well developed, then we have also to presume that the different categories of Ṛgvedic priests performed all the duties which were performed by the priests in the times of the later Vedas, the Brāhmaṇas and the Sūtras, which may not be easy to prove. Potdar[1] has remarked that, "Even in the case of the *hotā* priest, we cannot say that he did all the duties, ascribed to him in the later ritual, right from the beginning. His duties have come to be evolved in course of time and so too, it must have happened in the case of other priests mentioned in the hymns of the Ṛgveda"[2].

It seems therefore, that in the early period when the hymns of the Ṛgveda were composed, the "organisation of the Brahmins did not exist"[3] because there were limited numbers of families of Brahmins and out of these only a few were made priests.[4] The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* says, ". . . . And formerly, indeed the Vasiṣṭhas alone knew these utterances, whence formerly one of the Vaṣiṣṭha families became Brahmin, but since now-a-days, anybody may study them any body may now become a Brahmin." Fick says that the exclusiveness of the Brahmins as a caste existed only in theory. They had no well-organised bodies with a chief and a council. They were a body of priests who studied and meditated upon the Vedas and offered sacrifices to the gods.[5] In Ṛgvedic times, the office of the priest does not seem to have become hereditary as was the case later on. This is proved by the replacement of Vaṣiṣṭha by Viśvāmitra.[6] That any one could compose hymns and presumably officiate at sacrifices is shown by Ṛgveda, IX, 112.3., where the poet

Religion in Vedic literature, P.S. Deshmukh, pp. 153; and 341-42; Keith *Religion and Philosophy of the Veda*, pp. 253; 291-99.

1. Potdar (K.R.), op. cit., p. 160.
2. Ibid, p. 160.
3. Chawdhry (R.K.), '*Position of the Brahmins in Ancient India*, in P.K. Gode Commemoration Volume, p. 45, Poona, 1960; E.W. Hopkins, JAOS, Vol. XIII, p. 72.
4. Potdar (K.R.), op. cit., p. 160.
5. *Śat. Br.* (Eggelling's translation), p. 212.
6. Fick, *Social Organisation in Northern India*, pp. 180-247.
7. *Ṛ.V.* VIII, 18.23.

refers to himself as a maker of songs, to his father as a physician and his mother as a miller of grain. The poet describes the variety of trades and professions, like carpentry, bone-setting and priesthood, all in the same breath. This indicates that the poet is evidently not a Brahmin by descent. "The hereditary occupation was therefore, not yet a recognised principle far less an established fact. The utmost, that can be said is that there were recognised professions like priesthood or distinctions of nobility[1] and there had arisen inmany cases a tendency to become hereditary. . . ."[2] In this way the instance of Devāpī[3] and Viśvāmitra[4] who are supposed to have been Kṣatriyas, seem to indicate that up to now the Brahmin *Varṇa* did not become rigid" and that persons of exceptional abilities might still be admitted to the priestly class from all classeses especially the Kṣatriya class"[5].

But according to another view priesthood and nobility were hereditary even in the days of the Ṛgveda because other similar varṇa distinctions are to be found in other Indo-European communities, such as the partician *gentes* in Rome, the Eupatridae at Athens, the nobles of early Germany and the *Atharvas* and *Rathaesthas* in Iran[6]. The presence of similar institutions among the Indo-European peoples could not be explained if we are to think that *Varṇa* in the sense of class was unknown in the early part of the Ṛgvedic age[7]. Moreover the word *Brahmaputra*' son of a Brahmin, seem to prove that by that time the function of a Brahmin had already become profession[8]. This is further indicated by the verse which says : 'The speaking

1. Majumdar (R. C.), Ed. *Vedic Age*, pp, 384-88; J. W. Spellman, *Political Theory of Ancient India*, p. 73.
2. *R.V.* III. 33. 11. Commenting on this verse Dr. Keith argues that the instance of Devāī who combinded in himself the function of a priest shows merely that with the introduction of the caste system a king was not suddenly deprived of his original priestly rights and privileges". Rapson, '*Cambridge*' op. cit., Vol. I, p. 94.
3. *R.V.* VII, 18.23.
4. Dutt (N.K.), op. cit., p. 47.
5. Ibid.
6. Rapson, *Cambridge*, op. cit., p. 111-12.
7. Dutt (N.K.), op. cit., pp. 39-40.
8. *R.V.* II, 43.2.

Brāhmaṇa (i.e. the priest who duly discharge the task of recitation for which he is employed) earns more than the silent Brāhmaṇa[1]. Again the Ṛgveda draws a distinction between those who intelligently performed their duties and those who mechanically carried on the ceremonial of worship without understanding the meaning[2]. Dutt says, "This certainly presupposes the existence of a sacredotal class"[3]. Judging these two views on merit, it seems proper to accept the second view. Then as Dutt has pointed out we have to presume that at one time the Aryans had possessed such ideas of class distinction, then lost, and subsequently got them again in an inexplicable manner[4].

As the Vedic rituals grew and became complex, their knowledgefell more and more in the hands of a few peoples who delighted in these pursuits and practised the same. Thus, probably, during this period priesthood started becoming hereditary, but perhaps not to the extent of an insurmountable barrier capable of impeding the members of the priestly class from adopting the professions of others *Varṇas* and vice versa. This is indicated by the Pañcaviṁśa Brāhmaṇa where some Kṣatriya princes are said to have risen to the position of the Brahmanical sages by their virtues and are also said to have composed some of the hymns of the Ṛgveda[5]. In this connection the Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa says that a king can become a ṛṣi[6]. This is further proved by the use of the term Rājanya for a Brāhmiṇ in the Jaiminīya Upaniṣad Brāhmaṇa[7].

However, after having examined these instances Macdonell has concluded that these instances should not be given undue importance as not one of them can prove that the warrior acted

1. *Ṛ.V.* X. 117.7 But the silent brahman is not necessarily one who mechanically discharges his duty. The reciter may also discharge his duty without intelligence and moreover the brahman who acts as a controller of the ritual performance must discharge his duty carefully through silence.
2. Ibid. I. 164.45, and X. 71.8-9.
3. Dutt (N.K.), op. cit., p. 39-40.
4. Ibid, p. 39-40.
5. *Pañ. Br.* 12.12.6; 18.12.5. See also *Śat. Br.* 10.6.1.2.
6. Hopkins, '*The Position of the ruling Caste in Ancient India*', J.A.O.S. Vol. XIII, p. 154.
7. *Jaiminīya. up. Br.* 1.4.2.

as priest or that there was a change of *Varṇa*[1]. But he concludes that this is not possible[2]. So we can assume that in the period of the Ṛgveda, the change in profession might have been possible, but a little difficult in the Brāhmaṇas, till finally this possibility was ruled out in the Sūtra period. Thus "the Brāhmaṇa period presents us with a stage intermediate between the rules of the Sūtras and the laxity of the Ṛgveda"[3]. Thus it is quite obvious that priesthood became or tended to become hereditary, although the cases of Devāpi, Janaka, etc. serve as exceptions to this practice.

Here we may note that there were two kinds of priests i.e., the village priests and the priests of the kings[4].

VILLAGE-PRIESTS :

The first kind of priests officiated at the big sacrifices of people or were engaged to officiate at the big sacrifices such as *'Aśvamedha, Rājasūya, Vājapeya* etc. instituted by the kings and rich men. In the early Ṛgvedic age when the science of ritual was not sufficiently developed, sacrifices were performed by a few priests, but as it grew fully in the Brāhmaṇa and the Sūtra times, the services of a number of priests were required to perform big sacrifices. Even in the days of the Ṛgveda certain sacrifices required different classes of priests,viz., *hotā, potā, neṣṭhā, āgnīdhra. praśāstā, Adhvaryu, brahmā*[5]. Both Bṛhaspati[6] and Agni[7] are often described as *Purohitas*. Geldner seems to take the word in a special sense when he says that from the very beginning *Purohita* acted like the Brahmin *purohita*, as the

1. Macdonell and Keith, op. cit., VI. Vol. II, op. 260-63
2. Rapson, *'Cambrdge'*, op. cit., p. 112,
3. Ibid Parab (B.A.), *The Miraculous Hnd Mysterious In Vedic Literature*, p. 168. He writes, "The Brāhmaṇas, no doubt belong to a period of Indian history, when the priestly class had become conscious of its social position and vied with the ruling class to secure power and prestige....."
4. Ra pson, *Cambridge*, op. cit., p. 114.
5. Dutt (N. K.), op. cit., p. 41.
6. *Ṛ.V.* 2.24,9; *Ait. Br.* 3.17,2; *Tai. Br.* 2.7.8,2; *Śat. Br.* 5.3,1,2.
7. *Ṛ.V.* 1.1.1; 3.3,2; 5.21,2 : 8.27,, 10.1,6.

superintendent at the time of the sacrifice[1]. He shows on the basis of the examples of Vasiṣṭha, and Bṛhaspati who, though *Purohitas*, acted as *Brahman* at the time of the sacrifice[2]. But according to Macdonell it is not possidle to say that the Brahman at such an early period had the same important place as in later times[3]. Oldenberg opines that originally the *Purohita* acted as a *'hotā'* when the position of 'hotā' was important[4] but later on when chanting was the only part of the sacrifice, he became *Brahman* on account of his magical powers[5]. This conclusion is arrived at by him on the basis of the Ṛgveda, describing Agni[6] and Devāpī[7] as *hotṛs*. Thus the *Purohitas* helped in the growth of priesthood.

(*i*) *Number of the Priests* : Sixteen or seventeen priests were required to perform big sacrifices[8]. But there were sacrifices which could be performed by four, five, six, or ten priests[9]. The names of these priests were, *Hotā, Maitrāvaruṇa, Acchavāka Gravāstuta, Udgātā. Prastotā, Partihartā, Subrahmaṇya, Adhvaryu, Pratiṣṭhtā, Neṣṭā, Unnetā, Brahman, Brāhmaṇ-ācchhanśin, Agnidh and Potā*[10]. The seventeenth priests designnated as *Sadasya*[11]. Out of these priests four pries's were important, i.e., *Hotā, Udgātā, Adharyu and Brahman.* All the other priests were the assistants of these four head priests. Thus the *Hotā* was assisted by *Maitrāvaruṇa, Acchavāka*, and *Gravāstuta*; Udgātā was assisted by *Prastotā, Pratihartā, Subrahmaṇya*; *Adhvaryu* was assisted by *pratiṣṭhatā, Neṣṭā* and *Unnetā*; *Brahman* was assisted by *Brāhmaṇācchhanśin, Āgnīdhra* and *Potā*[12]. The Ṛgveda mentions about seven priests viz., *Hoṭā,*

1. Macdonell and Keith : op. cit., Vol. VI. II, p. 7-8.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Oldenberg : *Religion Des Veda*, p. 380, 381.
5. Macdonell and Keith, op. cit., VI. Vol. II p. 8.
6. *R.V.* 1.1.1; 3.3,2; 11,1; 5.11,2. VIII .27,1; 10.1.6.
7. *R.V.* 10.98; Pañch. Br. 14.6,8.
8. Macdonell and Keith, op. cit., VI. Vol. II, p.89.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid, Vol. I, 112-114.
11. Ibid Vol. II, 89.
12. Ibid, Vol. I, pp. 112-114.

Potā. Neṣṭhā, Agnīdhra, Praśāstā, Adhavryu and *Brahman*[1]. The word *Śapta-hotā* frequently occurs in the Ṛgveda[2].

(ii) Hotā : The office of the *Hotā* seems to be the oldest. His important function was to invoke the gods by reciting hymns and make offerings to them.[3] At one place he is called *āyajiṣṭha* (best of the priests).[4] It was he through whom the sacrificer used to propitiate the gods. Agni also played a similar role, as he was also called the *hotā* of the gods.[5] In the *Āpri* hymns the two are linked together and are know as '*the divine Hotṛs*' like *ṛitvij*.[6] The word '*Hotā*' is also used in the sense of a priest in general, particularly when the priests are said to be five or seven[7]. In the later period, it perhaps became customary to select the Hotā and to take him to the sacrificial place ceremoniously[8]. Thus Devāpī became the *Hotā*[9]. The Ṛgveda speaks of a ceremony with which the gods are said to have establised Agni as Hotā. This is possibly indicative of a similar ceremony with which the mortal *Hotā* was also established.[10] The choice of the *Hotā* was made keeping in view his previous experience[11]. It is contended that in the earliest period the function of the Brahman was also performed by him.[12] The *Maitrāvaruṇa* who was also known as *Praśāstā*[13] or *Upavaktā*[14] used to assist[15] him in big sacrifices and also in the recitation

1. *Ṛ.V.* II. 1.2; X. 91.10;Oldenberg, '*Religion*', op. cit., p. 383.
2. Macdonell and Keith, op. cit., VI. Vol. I., p. 122.
3. Potdar (K. R.), op. cit., p.101.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Velankar, *Āpri Hymns in the R.V., a study and a theory, Bombay University Journal* 1945-46; also R.V. X. 65.10.
7. Potdar (K.R.), op. cit., p. 161.
8. Ibid, p. 161-62.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid., p. 162-63.
13. Geldneṛ : '*Der Ṛigveda*', Vol. I, p. 430, II. 174, and III. p. 91, Here he takes the word to referto '*praśāstṛ*'.
14. Macdonell: *ERE* XII, p.611. He identifies him with the priest *Maitrāvaruṇa* of later days.
15. Potdar (K.R.), op. cit., p. 167.

of some prayers. The services of *Acchavāka*[1] and *Gravāstuta*[2] were required at the time of big sacrifices to share the work of the *Hotā* priest.

(*iii*) *Udgātā* : *Udgātā* was a priest whose function was to sing the hymns at the sacrifices. The word occurs only once in the Ṛgveda and signifies a priest singing the *Sāman* hymns.[3] This is not included in the list of the seven priests mentioned in the Ṛgveda.[4] It shows that the office of this priest became important in later days. He was assisted by *Prastotā, Pratihartā Subrahmaṇya* who make the calls in connection with sacrifices and sing the hymns, addressing them to *soma*[5]

(*iv*) *Adhvaryu* : The Adhvaryu[6] was the the next important priest. He was connected with the Yajurveda. His main function was to look after the details of the performance in association with the *hotā* priest.[7] In most of the passages they are associated with the pressing of Soma, indicating that they were engaged in the Somarituals[8]. The member of the *Adhvaryus* depended on the amount of the Soma-juice to be pressed.[9] The Ṛgveda refers to five *Adhvaryus* which may indicate the numbers of those priests moving about in the arena of the sacrifice[10]. He was assisted by the *Pratiṣṭhātā, Netā* and *Unnetā*[11].

(*v*) *Brahman* : In the early Ṛgvedic times the post of a *Brahman* priest was not very important, because the science of rituals had not become so complicated as in later times. Oldenberg suggests that the *Brahman* priest is not at all referred

1. Macdonell and Keith, *Vedic Index*, Vol. I, p. 113.
2. Ibid.
3. Potdar (K.R.), op. cit., 164
4. Ibid.
5. Maedonell and Keith : op. cit., Vol. I; p. 113.
6. The word *Adhvaryu* is derived from *avdhvar* 'to be defective'—one who ensures the perfection in the performance. See K.R. Potdar, op cit., p. 16·, fn.
7. Potdar (K.R.), op. cit., p. 163.
8. Ibid, op. cit., p. 163.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
11. Macdonell and Keith, *Vedic Index*, Vol. I, p.113.

to in the Ṛgveda[1]. Perhaps this office was introduced to honour a person.[2] In some of the Ṛgvedic hymns, he is described as singing but this does not appear to be his regular duty.[3] The idleness of the *Brahman* is indicated in a mantra where Indra asked to enjoy the Soma-juice and not be merely lazy like the *Brahman* priest[4]. Some scholars identify him with *Brāhmaṇāc-chaṅśin*[5] of the later ritual[6].

During that period the *hotā* was the most needed person. It has been suggested that as ritual grew complex, the *hotā* lost his position in the ritual and the Brahman priest became the supreme and the superintending priest[7]. In the later Vedas and the Brāhmaṇas, he is always referred to as the person who supervised the functions of the other priests and rectified the mistakes committed by them during the performance. The Gopatha Brāhmaṇa requires him to be endowed with full knowledge of Brahma Veda or Atharvaveda or Atharvāṅgiras[9]. He has to be all-knowing[10].

ROYAL-PRIESTS :

The second type of priests used to take care of the domestic rites and of the big sacrifices performed by the kings. Perhaps the main prop of the power of the Brahmanical order lay in the office of the royal priest.[11] The *Purohita* and his office called *Purohitī*[12] and *Purodhā*[13] are known even to the hymns of

1. Potdar (K.R.), op. cit., p. 164.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid (R.V.), 180.1, 164.34; II 2.6; VI. 45.7).
4. Ibid (R.V. VIII. 92.30 *mo su brahmeva tandragubhuvah*).
5. Ibid (R.V. IV. 58.2. Upa brahmeva Śruṇavacchasyamānaiṁ.
6. Deshmukh : op. cit., p. 342.
7. *Vait. Sūt.* II.2.
8. Macdonel Keith, op. cit., Vol. II, p.8; 78.
9. Gopatha Br. 1.2.19.
10. Ibid. 1.8.18.
11. Geoshal (U.N.) : *History of Hindu Public life.* pt. I, p. 24.
12. Ṛ.V., VII. 60.12; 83.4.
13. A.V. V.24.1.

the Ṛgveda.[1] Thus Viśvāmitra,[2] Vasiṣṭha,[3] Devāpī[4] and others are said to be the *Purohitas* of the king Śūdās and śantanu. This office of the *Purohita* was found not only among the mortal kings but even among the gods[5]. In this connection we may note that Bṛhaspati and Agni, who are frequently described as the *Purohitas* of the gods, represent the prototypes of the earthly priesthood in heaven[6]. Roth and Haug prefer to regard Bṛhaspati as a pure abstraction[7]. Haug believes that, "Bṛhaspati is a paramount priest of the Brāhmaṇa theology[8]". But on the other hand Oldenberg describes him as 'the domestic priest (*Purohita*) of the gods, the heavenly personification of the priesthood in so far as the latter has the power and function of influencing the course of events by prayer and magical incantation[9]". Pischel, again has placed him by the side of Indra, who has in him his *Purohita*, as in ancient India, the earthly king had by his side his *brahman-Purohita* (the domestic priest) skilled in magical art.[10]

The *Purohita* was a very important member of the society. At the time of a big sacrifice he used to engage other priests and himself acted as the superintendent. It is said that at first when the function of the *hotā* was the most important one, the *Purohita* would naturally take that office[11] but later when on account of the increased complications of the rituals, the office of Brahman became more important than that of the *hotā*, he took upon himself the function of Brahman instead of *hotā*[12].

1. Law (N.N.), '*Aspects*' op. cit., p. 39.
2. *R.V.* iii. 33.53.
3. *R.V.* XII. 18; vii. 33.13.
4. Yaska, *Nirukta*, ii. 10 on *R.V.* X, 98.
5. Hastings, ERE. Vol. II. 797.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. Oldenberg quoted in ERE. Vol. II, 797.
10. Ibid.
11. Macdonell and Keith, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 7-8; 78.
12. Ibid. *R.V.* II. 24.9; X. 141.3; *Ait. Br.* 7.26; *Tai. Sam.* III. 5.2.1.

Exalting the postion of the *purohita*, the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa declares that the king must appoint a *Purohita* for his sacrifices, for the gods eat not the food of a king without a *Purohita*. The king wins (or loses) heaven, a lordly power (*kṣatra*), the kingdom and the people, accordingly as he appeases (or does not) the *Purohita*, his wife and his son, for they are the three sacred fires. The king who has for his *Purohita* to guard the kingdom, a Brahmin, with this knowledge, wins full life. While he conquers *Kṣatra* by *Kṣatra*, his peoples remain in harmony with him[1]. The Ṛgveda declares that people themselves pay respect to the king, of whom the Brahmin goes before[2]. How high was the position of the *Purohita* is shown by the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* which says, "A very high position is held by him, who is a *purohita* in one kingdom; how much higher, then, is the position of the *Purohita* of two kingdoms"[3]. The *Purohita's* office is again described as the food of the Brahmin[4]. It is said that the king who appoints no family-(priest) *purohita*, is cast out from heaven, deprived of his heroism, of his dignity, kingdom and subjects[5]. According to the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa the *Purohita* stands in the same relationship to the king as a wife to her husband[6].

The very fact that sacrifices like the *Vajapeya*[7] and the *Bṛhaspatisava*[8] are prescribed for one who wished for this office,

1. *Aitreya. Br.* VIII. 24.
2. *R.V.* IV. 50.8.
3. *Śat. Br.* II. 4.4.8.
4. *PB.* XIII. 9.27; XIV. 9.38.
5. Eggeling : SBE. Vol. XIV.
6. *Ait. Br.* VIII. 27.
7. *Śat. Br.* V. 1.1.11. The reason why the Vājapeya was exalted lies according to Macdonell and Keith (VI. ii. 256) in the fact that Rājasūya was the monopoly of the Kṣatriyas while the Vājapeya, as Śatapatha Br. describes, the Brahmin's own sacrifice; and hence the Brāhmin was interested to give it a higher position than the other (Rājasūya).
8. *Tai. Br.* ii. 7.1.2. *Pañc. Br.* xvii. 11.4; XXV. 1.1.7. ct. *Kath. Saṁ.* XXXVII.7. The *Bṛhaspatisava* performed for inaugurating a Brāhmin to the office of royal priest has been identified with Vājapeya by *Śat. Br.* V. 2.1.19. If this is accepted then *Vājapeya* should be considered a sacrifice which serves the same purpose as the *Bṛhaspati sava*. See N.N. Law's : op. cit., p. 116, fn. 2.

shows its importance. A formula of the *Vājapeya* seems to convey sthe acrificer's wish of watching over the kingdom as the *Purohita*[1]. A prayer of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa also declares, "May we be wakeful in the kingdom, placed in the front, hail !"[2] The Taittirīya Saṁhitā describing a rite in connection with a dispute for *Purohitaship* says that "with brilliance, with Brahman he seizes on either side the kingdom and forthwith appropriates it: they choose him a Purohita"[3]. The indispensability of the *Purohita* is exemplified by the declaration of the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa which says that the king's consecration is to be announced alongwith the *ṛṣi* descent (*ārṣeya*) of his *Purohita*[4]. It also requires of the Kṣatriya the simultaneous handing over the sacrificer's shere to the Brahmin priest who is in relation of *Purohita* to the King[5]. In this context the same Brāhmaṇa makes a very outstanding statement that the *Purohita* is the half of the Kṣatriya[6].

It was a normal practice to appoint 'only one *Purohita* at a time'[7]. Vasiṣṭha[8] and Viśvāmitra[9] are the well-known examples. Kavaṣa[10] and Devāpī[11] were the priests of the king Kuruśravaṇa and Śantanu. These priests perhaps 'acted for life, though special occasions might arise involing the change of one *Purohita* for another as that of viśvāmitra for Vasiṣṭha[12]. That the same *Purohita* could have acted for more than one king[13]is indicated by Devabhāga Śrautarṣi, who appears as the 'domestic priest' of

1. (V.S.) IV.23; TS.1.7.10.
2. *Śat. Br.* V.2.2.5. But according to Ghoshal this ignores the technical sense of purohitāḥ. See *History of Hindu Public Life*, pt. I, p. 152.
3. *TŚ.* II. 1.2.9.
4. *Ait. Br.* VII, 25.
5. Ibid, 26.
6. Ibid.
7. Law (N.N.) : '*Polity*' op. cit., p. 44. Geldner thinks that several Purohitas were possible, but this view is dismissed as unsound by N.N. Law. See foot-note 9 on p. 44.
8. *R.V.* VII. 18.33.
9. *Ibid* III. 53.9-12; A*it.* VII. 17.18.
10. *Ibid* X. 33.
11. *Ibid* VII. 98.
12. *Ibid* VII. 18.33. cited by Dutt (N..) op. cit., p. 44.
13. Law (NN), *Polity*, op. cit., p. 45.

FUNCTIONS OF THE PUROHITA :

both the Kurus and Sṛñjayas[1] and Jala Jātukarṇya for three kings of Kāśī, Kosala and Videha[2]. Law observes that this could only be possible when there was amity between those kings[3].

Officiating at sacrifices: As we have noted earlier it was the duty of the king's chaplain to perform and look after the ordinary household ceremonies and to engage other priests for the big sacrifices. At the time of these sacrifices the latter held the post of the *hotā*. Later on when its importance declined, he took the position of a Brahman priest and thus became the general superintendent of the sacrifice. In the position of a Brahmin preist he had to suggest measures to rectify the mistakes committed by the subordinate priests during the ceremony[4]. In this way his functions were, the propiti ation of gods who do not accept food without him[5] and to per form sacrifices on behalf of the king for the sake of welfare and prosperity of both cattle and agriculture of the king, himself and the people[6]. The gods being pleased by his prayers showered rain for the crops[7] and so draught was averted by these magical prayers. It may indicate that the priests had the knowledge of the magical mantras. This is also clearly shown by the hymns of the Atharvaveda[8]. Their prayers also removed the epidemics[9]. By these the priest made a king worthy of heaven and full life[10]. That the *Purohita* was credited with the power of multiplying the people through divine interference is suggested by a story relating how people, having Vasiṣṭha as their *Purohita*, were multiplied by the favour of the god Indra

1. *Śat. Br.* ii. 4.4.5. cited by above.
2. Śān. Śrauta. S. XVI. 29.5.6.
3. Law. op. cit., '*Polity*', p. 45.
4. Macdonell and Keith, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 78.
5. *Ait. Br.* viii. 24.
6. *Vāj. Saṁ.* xxiii. 22. *Tai. Saṁ.* vii. 5.18. *Mait. Saṁ.* iii. 12.6.; *Kāṭhaka Saṁ.* V. 5.14.
7. *R.V.* X. 98.
8. Bloomfield : '*Hymns of Atharvaveda*' Introduction, LXVII-LXVII.
9. *R.V.* X. 98.
10. *A.B.* VIII. 24

on *Vasiṣṭha's* intercession[1]. The stanza of the Ṛgveda[2] which says that the people bow before a king who is preceded by a *Purohita* indicates indirectly that the priest helped the king in controlling the people because probably he had spiritual control which won him popular respect. Another important function of the priest was to consecrate the king at the coronation ceremony[3]. The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa mentions the *Purohita* just after the *senānī* in the list of ratnins participating in the jewel-offering ceremony. The *Purohita* figures also in the ceremony of passing round of the sacrificial sword in succession both according to the White and the Black Yajurveda[4]. The Aitareya Brāhmaṇa gives a long list of things which were consecrated with the *Mahābhiṣeka* of Indra by the *Purohiats*, so that they "went round the world and earth completely, winning on every side and offered the horse in sacrifice[5]".

To accompany the king to the battlefield : The *Purohita* used to accompany the king to the battlefield to secure his victory by means of his prayers[6]. Geldner as against Hopkins, feels that the priest (Viśvāmitra in this case) prayed in the 'house of assembly' (*sabhā*) for the victory of his Yajamāna against Sudās while the former was on the battlefield[7]. The Ṛgveda, ii. 18, shows that Viśvāmitra joined Sudās enemies and took part in the attack of ten kings against him, while Vasiṣṭha assisted him[8].

Protection of the realm and dignity : The *Purohita* is often called as '*Rāṣṭragopā* (protector of the relam). He guarded the kingdom like a flaming fire and ensured the king's power over his subjects[9] and his safety and victory in the battles.[10] The *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* says : "In this kingdom I make pros-

1. *Tai. Saṁ.* III. 5.2.; *K.S.* XXXVII. 17 and with a slight change in Pañ. Br. XV. 5.24.
2. *Ṛ.V.* IV. 50.8. See also *Yit. Ṛr.* VIII. 24.
3. *Ṛ.V.* X. 173.4-6 (Trans. by H.H. Wilson).
4. *Śat. Br.* V. 3.1.1-2.
5. *Ait. Br.* VIII. 21-23.
6. *Ṛ.V.* iii. 18.
7. Law (N.N.) : '*Polity*', op. cit., fn. 6 on p. 40.
8. *Ṛ.V.* viii. 18.
9. *Ait. Br.* viii. 24,25.
10. *A.V.* iii. 18, *Ṛ.V.* vii. 18.13.

perity to dwell, O gods, for the protection of the kingdom, to win security from danger"[1]. Numerous stories are found which speak of the kings who were saved by their *Purohitas* from their enemies. Thus the Pañcaviṁśa Brāhmaṇa[2] tells us how Divodāsa, being hemmed in by his enemies sought the help of the Purohita Bhāradvāja who rescued him from this difficult situation. Kṣatra, son of Pratardana, in trouble was rescued by Bhāradvāja on whose invoking Indra appeared and drove away his enemies[3]. These instances show the need of amity between the king and the priest because on the 'mediation with the higher powers'[4] depended the prosperity of the kingdom. This of course points to the indissoluble bond uniting the king and *Purohita*. According to Law "The connection between Brahmins and the Kṣatriyas was generally recognised as indispensable for the welfare of both, and a loose relationship between the monarch and his *Purohita* was but an offshoot thereof, where amity was more needed than anywhere else"[5].

But in spite of *Purohita's* services in securing victory or immunity from attack for the kings, he sometimes received ill treatment from them, leading to the opposition of the *Purohitas*. Sometimes this resulted in the king losing his life. According to a story of the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, a *Purohita* proclaimed Indra's *mahābhiṣeka* for a great man who was not a king, and helped him conquer the world. But this king afterwards deprived the *Purohiia* of his duties and cheated him of his dues. As a result the man was deprived of his strength and was killed by another king[6]. The incident shows the significance of the oath of non-ịnjury to the *Purohita* which a Kṣatriya sacrificer was required to take in a striking formal style and under terrible penalties[7]. In another story Viśvantara Saušadana is said to have removed his priests, the śyāparṇas, and performed a sacrifice presumably with the aid of other priests, but Rāma-

1. *A.B.* vii. 27.
2. *Pañ. Br.* XV. 3.7.
3. *Jai. Br.* III. 244-247; *Bṛhaddevatā* V. 124-138.
4. Law : op. cit., *Polity*, p. 41.
5. Law (N.N.), op. cit., p. 41.
6. *Ait. Br.* VIII. 23; 15.
7. Ibid. VII. 15. See Ghoshal (U.N.), op. cit., '*Hindu*', p. 155.

Mārgaveya, their leader succeeded in bringing about their reinstatement.[1] The disputes between Janamejaya and his priests, the Kaśyapas which ended in the the restoration of their rights once again by Asitamrigas,[2] between Asamāti and Gaupayanas[3] and between Kutsa Aurava and his priest, Upagu Sauśravasa, killed for paying homage to Indra, to whom the former was hostile may be cited here[4]. A very interesting story is recorded in the Pañcaviṁśa Brāhmaṇa which relates that the Ikṣvākū and his *Purohita* Vṛśa Jāna fell out over the question of responsibility for the death of a Brahmin boy who was run over by theking's chariot while he was driving along with his *Purohita* holding the reins. On consultation, the Ikṣvākūs adjudged him guilty and he took his revenge by afflicting the people until he was placated[5]. These stories show that the priests were in a position to bring ruin to the kings "by means of sacrifices" and imprecations whenever they were treated badly but they also secured for them victories and "universal dominions"[7] when treated otherwise.

Describing the functions of the castes, the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa says that a Brahmin is a receiver of gifts (Ā-dāyī), a drinker of Soma (*āpāyī*) and a person liable to be removed at will (*Yathākāmaprayāpyaḥ*)[8]. Muir[9] has translated *Yathākāmapṛayāpyāḥ* as liable to removal at will but Haug[10] and Weber[11] have interpreted it as "moving at will". The second interpretation looks better because we have seen that it was not easy for a king to remove the priest at his own sweet will. This may be taken as a reference to the freedom of the Brahmin. Law's inference

1. *Ait. Br.* vii. 27.3,4; 34.7.8; Muir. op. cit. i.430-40; Eggeling S.B.E. XLIII.344.
2. *Ait.Br.* vii. 27, 35.
3. *Jai. Br.* iii. 167 (J.A.O.S. xviii. 41ff), *Pañ. Br.* xiii.12.5.
4. *Pañc. Br.* xiv 6.8.
5. Ibid. xiii. 3.12.
6. Law N.N. '*Polity*', op. cit., p.42.
7. Ghoshal U.N., op. cit., '*Hindu*', pt. I, p.154.
8. *Ait, Br.* vii. 29.
9. Muir, op. cit., Vol. I, 436.
10. Haug, *Ait Br.* vii. 29.
11. Weber '*Indische Studien*', X.14.

that it refers to "a general pollitical control over the priest and of persons of his caste", cannot be accepted because it does not give that sense at all. It seems that during that period the Brahmins were superior to the Kṣatriyas[1]. Of course, it is known that all texts are due to Brahmins themselves.

To Act as Ratnin at the coronation of the king : The name of the *Purohita* is always mentioned among the *Ratnins*[2] of the king in whose house, a rite named '*Ratnahaviṃsi*' was perfoemed' at the time of the consecration ceremony. These *Ratnins* perhaps formed an assembly which chose the king[3] as indicated by the word '*Rājakartṛ*' (king-makers).[4] A peculiar ceremony formed the part of the *Rājasūya* sacrifice in which the priest silently strikes the king[5]. Various explanations are given for this act of the priest. According to Weber herein lies the evidence suggesting the great authority wielded by the priest[6]. Dr. Ghoshal explains it as a purificatory rite exempting the king from punishment[7]. Jayaswal prefers to take it as a rite which brings the king under the law[8] which implies that it was a rite of initiation or a test to find the power of endurance in the tribal chief. So it is correct to say, in later times the priests had used ritual to assert their power over the kings. Thus the real power of the priests was derived from these rituals.

1. Law, op. cit., p.42.
2. *Tai Saṁ.* 1.8.9.1; *Tai Br.* 17.3.1; *Śat. Br.* 5.3.1.1.; The *Taittiriya Saṁhitā* and *Brāhmana* mention the *Ratnins* in this order (1) *Brahmin* (2) *Rāj anya* (3) *Senānī* (4) *Sūta* (5) *Grāmaṇī* (6) *Kṣattr* (7) *Saṁgrahītṛ* (8) *Bhāgadugha and* (9) *Akṣavāka*, excluding *Mahiṣī* king's first wife *Vavāta* (King's favourite wife) and Parivṛkti (king's discarded wife).
3. Weber : *Uber den Rājasūya*, p. 53. quoted by Ghoshal (U.N.), *Historiography and other Essays*, p. 2.
4. Ibid.
5. *Śat. Br.* V. 4.4.7.
6. Weber : *Uber den Rājasūya*, p. 63. quoted by Ghoshal (U.N.), *Historiography and other Essays*, p.2.
7. Ghoshal (U.N.), Ibid, p.269.
8. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*, p.217.

(*iii*) *Receiving of gifts* : It was customary to give gifts (*dakṣiṇā*) at the successful completion of the sacrifices. In the Ṛgveda[1] are found '*Dānastutis*' (praises of gifts). At some places the greed of accepting has transgressed the limit.[2] The Vedic books have themselves stated that the *Nārāśaṁśīs*, composed to please the giver of the gifts[3] are often false. The Aitareya Brāhmaṇa describes a Brahmin as a person who accepts the gifts (ādayī)[4]. The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa[5] includes the accepting of gifts among the duties of a Brahmin. But it also says that the Brahmin should not accept things rejected by others[6]. Probably they alone had the right of accepting gifts as is indicated by the statement of the Pañcaviṁśa whereby Tarant and Purumīlaha had to compose a hymn of the Ṛgveda in order to make themselves worthy of gifts[7]. The Śatapatha Brāhamaṇa again tells us, "The Brahmins are the human gods. Between these two is the sacrifice divided : the sacrificial gifts are for the gods, presents (dakṣiṇās) for the human gods; the learned and studying Brahmins; these two kinds of gods transfer him, when satisfied, into the blessed heaven"[8]. The same source prescribe the gift of gold in the *Agnihotra*[9] rite because it is performed in honour of Agni. In this connection the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa lays down that the sacrifice does not move on but is destroyed in the absence of the gift(*dakṣiṇā*), just as a cart cannot move without a bull[10]. The Taittirīya Saṁhitā excludes the gift of silver from the list of articles which could

1. *Ṛ.V.* 1.126
2. Macdonell and Keith : *Vedic Index*, Vol. II, p.82.
3. *Kath. Saṁ.* 14.5. *Tai. Br.* 1.3,2,6,7. Macdonell and Keith *Vedic Index* Vol. II, p. 82-83.
4. *Ait. Br.* 7.29.2.
5. *Śat. Br.* 11.5.7.1.
6. Ibid. 13.4,3,14.
7. *Pañ Br.* 9.59.3.
8. *Śat Br.* II. 2,2,6; IV. 3,4,4.
9. Ibid II. 2.2.3.28. "तस्य हिरण्यं दक्षिणा । आग्नेयो वा एष यशो भवति ।"
10. *Ait. Br.* 6.45.

be given[1]. If anybody offers a gift of silver then within a year some calamity befalls him[2]. At some[3] places goats and sheeps are excluded from the range of gifts. The Gopatha Brāhmaṇa gives a detailed description of the way in which the different limbs of the sacrificed animal should be distributed among the priests. Thus for each sacrifice the officiating priests demand their "*dakśiṇā*" or reward of gold and kine. We are also told that a worshipper gave 85000 white horses, 10000 elephants, and 80000 slave girls aborned with ornaments to the Brahmins who performed the sacrifice[4]. Max Weber says, "The Brahmin accepted only gifts (*dakṣiṇā*), not pay. The giving of gifts for the use of their services was, of course, a ritualistic duty. A sacrifice without gifts brought evil enchantment; moreover, his magical power enabled the Brahmin to avenge severely the denial of gifts, by curses or intentional ritualistic errors in the performance of the sacrifice, bringing misfortune to the lord of the sacrifice"[5]. The minimum value of the gifts was stipulated and unfair competition among Brahmin prohibited. It was permissible under certain conditions to inquire in advance as to the size of the intended gift. Their tremendous magical power permitted the Brahmins, in Weber's expression, "true orgies of covetousness"[6]. In the *Daśapeya* sacrifice the sacrificer gives twelve heifers to the Brahman[7]. A golden wreath, a gold plate, two golden mirrors, a horse, a sterile cow, a bull, two garments, a cart laden with barley and yoked with an ox on one side and an ox are the articles which are to be given to *Hotā, Udgātā, Adhvaryu, Prastotā, Maitrāyaruṇa, Brāhmaṇāc-chhamśin Neṣṭā* and *Potā, Accnhāvāka, Agnīdha* respectively, in the *Daśapeya* sacrifices"[8]. Thus 'twelve or thirteen presents

1. *Kāt. Ś.S.* 10.2.84.
2. *Tai. Saṁ.* 1.5.1.
3. Ibid. 2.3, 12,1.2; Kaṭh.Saṁ. 12.6.
4. *Go. Br.* 1 3.18.
5. Weber, "*Indisncen Studien*", X.p 54; *Śat Br.* II. 6.3.9.
6. Max Weber : op. cit., p. 29-37.
7. Ibid.
8. *Śat Br.* 5.4.5. 20.
9. Ibid 5.4.5.22.

are given"[1]. At another place the three gold pieces of a hundred *mānas* each are described as sacrificial fee[2]. But at the same time it is also stated that the priests have nothing to do with the gold, the presents of gold are only the object of respect[3]. It indirectly refers to the disinterestedness of the Brahmins towards gold, but since gold had a value and it was given to important persons, therefore in order to distinguish themselves the Brahmin priests had to take these gifts of gold[4]. Thus we have seen that they depended very much on gifts. This was, after all, the major source of livelihood for priests.

OTHER MEANS OF LIVELIHOOD :

Apart from the trades, occupations described above, not much information is available regarding the other avocations persued by the Brahmins. We have already seen that due to the non-completion of the division of labour, the same Vedic family would count among its members a poet, a surgeon-physician and woman miller. It is often claimed that the Ṛgvedic people lived by cattle-raising and agriculture. Although no specific mention of Brahmins in agriculture is found, they do seem to have had this trade[5]. Later, when their position as priests became consolidated, they might have given up this profession. Probably cattle-raising was also followed. Trade does not seem to have been followed by the Brahmins. Ludwig says that Dīrghaśravas was a Brahmin, who had been reduced to poverty by his following the occupation of trade.[6] But this cannot be proved.

1. *Śat. Br.* 5.4.5.23.
2. Ibid 5.5.5.16.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Macdonell and Keith : '*Vedic Index*', Vol. II, p.260.
6. Ibid. Gupta (K.M.) : *The Land-system And Agriculture of the Vedic Age*, in *Sir Asutosh Mookerjee Silver Jubilee Volume* Vol. III Orientalia, pt. 2, p.531.

SOCIAL POSITION :

(*i*) *Brahmin's place in Society* : The *Puruṣasūkta*[1] of the Ṛgveda speaks of the fourfold division of the Vedic society. Here we are told how the Brahmin, Rājanya, Vaiśya and Śūdra were produced out of the mouth, the arms, the thighs and the feet of the cosmic Man at the beginning of the creation. This instance may be taken as the implied hint to "Brahmin's divine right, to his social precedence by virtue of his original creation"[2]. Again the social status of the Brahmins is indicated by another mantra of the Ṛgveda which says that "that king alone, who places Brahma first dwells happily in his house, for him the earth always remains prosperous and to him all the people (or kingdom) bowdown of their own accord"[3]. By describing the *Brahmacārin* as a member of the god's own body, the Ṛgveda again suggests the divine sanctity of the Brahmins[4]. In the late Vedic period the Brahmins were openly declared as gods, though of a lower order. Thus the Taittirīya Saṁhitā[5] declares Brahmins to be the gods who receive offerings secretly. Again the *Maitrāyanī Saṁhitā*[6] says, "There are two classes of gods viz., the gods proper who drink the soma (somapāḥ) and eat sacrificial offerings (*hutadāh*) and Brahmins who do not eat offerings. The Atharvaveda also raises the Brahmins to the position of the gods and therefore mentions them together with gods"[7]. In the Atharvaveda, V.18, are mentioned the dreadful consequences of devouring a Brahmin's cow and of robbing or injuring him[8]. The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa mentions two classes of gods viz. the gods proper and human gods who have studied and who teach the sacred lore"[9].

1. *Ṛ.V.* X.90
2. Ghoshal (U.N.) : '*Hindu*' op. cit., pt. I, p.23,168.
3. *Ṛ.V.* IV. 50.8.
4. Ibid. X. 109.
5. *Tai. S.* 1.7.3.
6. *Mait. S.* 1.4.6.
7. *A.V.* VI. 12.2; XII. 4.10. 53.
8. Ibid. V;18.
9. *Śat. Br.* 11.2.2.6; IV. 3.4.4.

In the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa[1] Hariścandra is made to say at the time of the sacrificing of a Brahmin boy that a Brahmin is not indeed preferable to Kṣatriya. Here the phenomenon of birth gave the Brahmin the precedence over the Kṣatriya boy. The Gopatha Brāhmaṇa[2] states that the sacrificer propitiates the oblation-eating gods by means of offerings and the human gods by means of the sacrificial fee.

Other passages speak of the freedom of the Brahmins from the king's control. In the explanation of the *Rājasūya* ceremony in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa,[3] We learn that "thereby his kingship (*rājanaym*) is rendered free (unopposed) over Kṣatra and Viś." The Pañcaviṁśa Brāhmaṇa[4] is more explicit. Explaining the use of appropriate chants at the time of the consecration ceremony by saying that thereby he takes Brahma from Kṣatra and therefore the Brahmiṇs are able to punish in return (i.e. as they are not subject to Kṣatriyas), their supporters (i.e. the nobles). This takes us to the famous saying which occurs in so many texts in the context of the *Rūjasūya* ceremony which reads : This is your king, O ye people, Soma is the king of us Brahmins"[5]. According to Ghoshal this maxim "makes Brahmins a state within or rather beyond the state under the authority of the king Soma"[6]. This verse also implies that although part of the tribe they are raised above the common people belonging to tribe. Or it might suggest that since the Brahmins do not belong to the original tribe they are exempted from the authority of the king : this might indicate the non-Aryan origin of the Brahmins. . ."[7] According to Heesterman this passage does not refer to the special position of the Brahmins[8]. Controverting this view Prof. Sharma remarks that this cannot be accepted because the privileged Position of

1. *Ait. Br.* 33.4.
2. *Gopatha Br.* II.1 6.
3. *Śat Br.* V. 4.3.16-17.
4. *Pañ. Br.* XVIII. 16.8. (Translated by W. Caland).
5. V.S. IV.40; X.18; Tai. S. 1.8.10; 12; K.S. XV.7, Mai.S. II·6.9.
6. Ghoshal (U.N.), op cit., '*History*' pt. I, p.146.
7. Sharma (R.S.), '*Aspects*', op.cit.,p.120.
8. Heesterman (J.C.), '*The Ancient Indian Royal Consecration*', pp. 77-48.

the Brahmins is indicated by means of many passages.[1] One of these passages says that the Brahmin is not to be lived upon by the king".[2] Therefore "it would be wrong to think that the passage implies the glorification of the royal sacrificer and not the independence of the Brahmins".[3] Hence the position of the Brahmins as gods in society and their non-subjection to the king eventually ammount to their domination over the Kṣatriyas. But this domination was not gained very easily by them. The Vedic texts refer to the regular feud between the common man and nobility when Brahmins began to assert their superiorty over the Rājanya.[4] The Ṛgveda itself refers to the constant feud between Vastiṣṭha (a Brahmin) and Viśvāmitra (who is thought to be a Kṣatriya in later texts).[5] Elsewhere in the Ṛgveda the king or the Kṣatriya is enjoined under the most solemn thaeats and high promiss to restore the Brahmin's wife to her husband.[6] A number of threats are held out in the Atharvaveda against the oppressor of the Brahmins.[7] One passage of the Atharvaveda says that "no beautiful wife or necklaced attandant, no cattle. no horse, comes to him in whose kingdom a Brahmin dame is detained through senseless love".[8] These threats show that the conflict "between the Brahmins and Kṣatriyas was a regular feature of this epoch and the war between these two *Varṇas* might have continued for about a hundred years".[9] From these conflicts at last the Brahmins probably emerged victorious.[10]

According to Ghoshal this claim to superiority "is sometimes tempered by the admission of their interdependence, equality, or even the superiority of *Kṣatra* to *Brahma*.[11] The

1. Sharma (R.S.), '*Aspects*', op. cit., p.121.
2. *Śat. Br.* 5.3.3.12.
3. Sharma (R.S.), '*Aspects*' op. cit., p.121.
4. Chawdhry (R.K.), Loc cit., Poona, 1960.
5. *R.V.* VII. 33.
6. *R.V.* X. 109.
7. *A.V.* V. 18.
8. Ibid V.17.
9. Chawdhry (R.K.), Loc. cit., p.43.
10. Frazer, '*A Literary History of India*', p. 92.
11. Ghoshal (U.N.), op. cit., pt. I. p.164.

interdependence of *Brahma* and *Kṣatra* is expressed in the Taittirīya Saṁhitā[1]. It reads : "Verily by means of the *Brahma*, he quickens the *Kṣatra* and by *Kṣatra* the *Brahma* : therefore a Brahmin who has a Rājanya is superior to another Brahmin : therefore a Rājanya who has a Brahmin, is superior to another Rājanya." In this context the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa[2] declares that *Brahma* and *Kṣatra* are established on each other. The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* says, "These two (the *Śrotriya* and king) are the upholders of the sacred law among men"[3]. The glory and success resulting from the co-operation between the Brahmins and the Kṣatriyas is frequently emphasized. Speaking about the co-operation of these two *Varṇas*, the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*[4] says, "Therefore a Brahmin must certainly be approached by a Kṣatriya who is about to perform some act, for indeed that act of the Kṣatriya, which is sped on by Brahmin, succeeds." Harmony between *Brahma* and *Kṣatra* is again made the subject of the simile in the Taittirīya Saṁhitā.[5] The close relationship of the Brahmin and the Rājanya is said to be the most desirable and is conducive to the eminence of both[6]. Again the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa[7] declares 'that the king who is not powerful to the Brahmins (i.e. who is humble before the Brahmins) indeed becomes more powerful than his foes". Thus they were recognised as the two dominant forces in society. We have numerous passages which refer to the joint sovereignty of *Brahma* and *Kṣatra* over the *viś*. The Taittirīya Saṁhitā[8] says that the priest thereby brings vigour and strength into *Brahma* and *Kṣatra* and makes *viś* subject to both. This notion seems to be working at the back of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa[9] which says that *Brahma* and *Kṣatra* are established upon the

1. *Tai. S.* V.1.10.3; VIII.5.23.
2. *Ait. Br.* VIII.2.
3. *Śat.* Br. V.4.4.5.
   See also Gau. Dh. S. VIII.1., Manu IX.3.22.
4. Śat. Br. IV.1.4.6.
5. *Tai. S.* VII.5.23.
6. Ibid. V. 1.10.3.
7. *Śat. Br.* V. 4.4.15.
8. *Tai S.* III. 5.7.2-3.
9. *Śat. Br.* XI. 2.7.16

people. While explaining a certain rite of keeping the sacred fire it says,[1] "The Brahmin and the Kṣatriya never go behind the Vaiśya and the Śūdra, they walk thus in order to avoid the confusion between the good and bad." By performing the rite in this manner, the priest encloses the Vaiśya and Kṣatra and makes them submissive. On the other hand the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa[2] says that by uttering a certain formula of the Soma sacrifice in the proper order, the priest makes *Kṣatra* dependent upon the Brahma and the Viś dependent upon the *Kṣatra*. The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa[3] says that the priest sprinkles the sacrificer with *Brahma* and *Kṣatra*, identified with Bṛhaspati and Soma respectively. Again the same work justifies a certain rite of the *Rājasūya* by saying that "thereby the king's distinction is guarded on either side by *Brahma* and *Kṣatra*."[4]

Prayers frequently occur in the Vedic texts for the welfare of these two, the *Brahma* and the *Kṣatra*. One such prayer reads, "In the priesthood (*Brahma*), may the Brahmin be born endowed with spiritual lustre (*Brahmavarcas*). In the royal order (*Kṣatra*) may the Rājanya be born, heroic, skilled in archery, sure of his mark and a mighty car-fighter".[5] Glossing it the Śatapatha says that the Brahmins are the representative of spiritual lustre whereas the Kṣatriyas represent the temporal lustre[6].

The Aitareya Brāhmaṇa seems to recognise the dominance or superiority of the *Brahma* over the *Kṣatra* by declaring that *Brahma* in prior to *Kṣatra*[7]. At another place a sacrificer wished "That his *rāṣṭra* (sway) with brahma in front may be dreaded and unassailable"[8]. In the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, VIII. 9, the dominance of the spiritual power over the temporal power is clearly hinted. Here the sacrificer, after alighting from the throne, is made to utter thrice the formula of salutation to

1. *Śat. Br.* VI. 4.4.3.13.
2. *Ait. Br.* II. 33; *Pañ. Br.* II. 8.2. XI. 11.8; XV. 6.3.
3. *Śat. Br.* V. 3.5.8.
4. *Śat. Br.* VIII. 1.5.3-5.
5. *V.S.* XXII. 22.
6. *Śat. Br.* XIII. I. 9.1-2.
7. *Ait. Br.* VIII. 1-4.
8. Ibid.

Brahma (*namo Brāhmaṇe*). "Verily thus" says the author, "the *Kṣatra* falls under the influence of the Brahma"[1]. Justifying this procedure the author continues, 'When the Kṣatra falls under the influence of Brahma, that kingdom is prosperous, rich in cows, in it a hero is born".[2] The Pañcaviṁśa Brāhmaṇa explaining a certain verse says, "Therefore, the *Brahma* is yoked (ranged) before *Kṣatra*, for the *Brahma* comes before *Kṣatra*"[3]. In this context the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa records a legend which says that in the beginning Mitra and Varuṇa were separate. Then Mitra, the Brahma, could stand without Varuṇa, the Kṣatra, but Varuṇa could not stand without Mitra. Whatever deed Varuṇa did, unsped by Mitra, the Brahma, therein forsooth he succeeded not". Then Varuṇa invited the assistance of Mitra, whatever Varuṇa thenceforth did, in that he succeeded". Hence it is quite proper that a Brahmin should be without a king . . . . It is however quite improper that a king should be without a Brahmin, for whatever deed he does, unsped by Mitra, the Brahma, therein he succeeded not".[4] The above legend of their prototypes proves that "the spiritual power is essential adjunct of temporal, but not vice-versa[5]. The declaration of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa says that "Kṣatra is produced out of Brahma"[6], virtually amounts to saying "that the temporal power is derived from the spiritual".[7]

Thus spirituality is supposed to be the permanent attribute of the Brahmin just as fighting is supposed to be the attribute of the Kṣatriya[8]. The contrast between the functions of these two is very well brought out by the words of the Aitareya,[9] "The weapons of Kṣatriya are the horse, the chariot, the armour, the bow and the arrow, whereas the weapon of a Brahmin is sacrifice. Else-where the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa mentions the incompatibi-

1. *Ait. Br.* VIII.9.
2. Ibid.
3. *Pañ. Br.* XI. 1.2.
4. *Śat. Br.* IV. 1.4.1-6.
5. Ghoshal (U.N.) : op. cit. p. 78.
6. *Śat. Br.* XII. 7.3.12.
7. Ghoshal (U.N), op. sit.. p.78.
8. Ibid, p.74.
9. *Ait. Br.* VII. 19.

lity of Brahma and Kṣatra for each other's functions saying that "unsuited for kingship is the Brahmin"[1]. This contrast may lead to the view of their inherent antagonism. In one of the rites of the *Aśvamedha*, the Brahmin and the Rājanya play the lute for a year by day and by night respectively[2]. It further says that sacrifice and fulfilment belongs to Brahmin while the Rājanya's strength is battle.[3]

The texts which speak of the *Brahma* and *Kṣatra* as the co-ordinate authorities, also sometimes place Kṣatriya (king) directly above the Brahmin. A Brahmin is described as an object of respect after the king[4]. The people serve him, seated above, from lower position[5]. The Śatapatha[6] goes on to declare, "Therefore, there is nothing higher than Kṣatra, therefore the Brahmin sits below in the Rājasūya. Similar views are expressed in the Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad[7]. The Taittirīya Saṁhitā also speaks of a rite by whose performance the Brahmins, the Vaiśyas and the Śūdras become obedient to the Rājanya[8].

These illustrations eventually lead one to conclusion that all the Saṁhitā except the Ṛgveda Saṁhitā and the Brāhmaṇas, in general advocate the superiority of the Brahmin to Kṣatriya. Occasionally, however, they admit their equality or even the Brahmin's relative inferiority.[9]

(*ii*) *Position of Respect* : During this period the Brahmins were highly respected. They were honoured as the seers of the sacred Vedic hymns and as priests or members of the Brahmin *Varṇa*. The Ṛgveda places the Brahmin ahead of the king and makes him an object of respect and homage.[10] The Taittirīya Saṁhitā declares that the Brahmins are gods who receive offerings openly as against the gods proper who receive

1. *Śat Br.* V. 1.1.12.
2. Ibid. XIII. 1.5.2-5.
3. Ibid.
4. *Śat Br.* (Madhya). 1.3.2.
5. Ibid. V. 4.2.7.
6. Ibid. 14.4.1.23.
7. *Br. up.* 1.4.11.
8. *Tai.* S. 5.10.1.
9. Ghoshal (U.N), '*Hindu*', op. cit., pt. I, p.97.
10. *R.V.* 4.50.8, 9.

them secretly"[1]. Further the Maitrāyaṇī Saṁhitā[2] classifying the gods into two groups says, "There are two classes of gods, i.e. the gods proper who drink Soma (*Somapāḥ*) and eat sacrificial offerings and the Brahmins who do not eat such offerings". In similar style the Śatapatha speaks of two classes of gods viz. the gods proper and human gods (Brahmins) who have study and who teach the sacred lore.[3] In this connection the Gopatha Brāhmaṇa[4] says that the sacrificer propitiates the oblation eating gods by means of offerings and human gods by sacrificial fee. Again the Śatapatha makes it the duty of the person of other *Varṇas* to honour the Brahmins (*Arca*).[5] The Brahmins are called Bhagvant.[6] Wherever they go, they should be honoured with the best food.[7] According to the Pañcaviṁśa, it is the purity of their *Varṇa* which makes them free from all doubts regarding their Brahminhood.[8]

As royal Purohitas, they held a very high position. They are spoken as the halves of the kings.[9]

According to the Atharvaveda[10] the Brahmins would punish those who maltreated them. Even their cows were not to be eaten by the non-Brahmins.[11]

THE BRAHMIN AND LAW :

(*i*) *Safety of Brahmin's person and property* : The person and the property of a Brahmin were safe in those times. The Atharvaveda reminds the king or the Rājanya of the dire consequences of devouring a Brahmin's cow and of robbing or

1. *T.Ś.* 1.7.3.
2. *M.Ś.* 1.4.6.
3. *Śat. Br.* 11.2.2.6; 4.3,4.4.
4. *Go. Br.* II.1.6.
5. *Śat. Br.* 11.5.7.1.
6. Ibid. 14.6.1,2.
7. *Kaṭh. S.* 19.12.
8. *Pañ. Br.* 6.5,8.
9. *Ait. Br.* 34.8.
10. *A.V.* 18.8.
11. Ibid.

injuring him[1]. The man who counts the Brahmins as mere food i.e. who takes their wealth or dishonours them, drinks poison[2], the blasphemer who coveting their wealth slays them has a fire kindled in his own heart by Indra. One who wishes for his well being should not injure a fire like Brahmin for Soma is his king and Indra, his protector against imprecations.[3] In other words the Brahmin is the link between gods and men (*devabandhu*). Another verse says that (the Brahmin's) tongue turns into a bowstring, his voice into the neck of an arrow; his wind pipe and his teeth are bedaubed with holy fire; with these the Brahmin strikes those who revile the gods, by means of bows that have the strength to reach the heart, discharged by the gods.[4] The Śatapatha Brāmaṇa states that a Brahmin must not be utilized as food, for he has soma as his king.[5]

Thus the Brahmin is evidently credited not only with divine protection but also with quasi-divinity.

The Brahmins had the sole privilege to accept the remains of the sacrifice. The Taittirīya Saṁhitā asserts, "Nothing injures the stomach of the Brahmins,"[6] evidently indicating that objects and food, for instance the remains of sacrifices, etc., which could not be accepted by any other individual, should be given to a Brahmin[7].

(*ii*) *Legal Privileges* : Although the Vedic literature does not enumerate a long list of privileges, some of them are worth being noticed here. The Śatapatha[8] mentions security against oppression and capital punishment as the special rights of the Brahmins. The Taittirīya Saṁhitā lays down that a fine of one thousand and one hundred respectively is to be imposed on the person striking a Brahmin and showing disrespect to him. But for extracting the blood of a Brahmin spiritual

1. Bloomfield : A.V. IX. V. 18.
2. Ibid. V.18, p. 169.
3. Ibid. IX V. 18.5, p. 169-70.
4. Ibid, IX. V. 18.8. p.170.
5. *Śat. Br.* 12.4.4.6.
6. *Tai S.* II. 6.8.7.
7. Law (B.C.), '*Indological Studies*', pt. I, ch. II.
8. *Śat. Br.* 11.5.7.1.

punishment is prescribed[1]. The Śatapatha treats a Brahmin's murder more seriously and declares the same as the only and real murder[2]. The Yajurveda places the destroying of an embryo at the head of such crimes. But the murder of a Brahmin is a crime greater than the crime of killing persons of other *Varṇas*. It further declares that the destruction of an embryo of unknown gender is equal to the murder of a Brahmin[3]. According to the Śatapatha sin incurred by the killing of a Brahmin can only be expiated by the performing of the *Aśvamedha* sacrifice[4]. However the killing of a Brahmin in connection with a ceremony is hinted at in the story of *Śunaḥ-śepa*[5]. But it is not clear if such ritual slaughter was really practised. The Pañcaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa declares that capital punishment can be accorded to a Brahmin (*Purohita*) on the charge of deceiving his patron[6].

The statement made at the Rājasūya sacrifice to the effect that 'O men, this is your king; Soma is our king (i.e. the king of Brahmins),[7] indicates the non-submission of Brahmins to state-control. Elsewhere the Śatapatha declares that the properties of the Brahmins are excluded from the gift of land made by the kings[8]. The same source says that a king can punish everybody except a Brahmin[9]. A king cannot live after harrassing a noble Brahmin though he may harrass a bad Brahmin (so as to set him right)[10]. Partiality is shown to Brahmins in the statement that a mediator or a judge should always give his decision in favour of a Brahmin, in case of dispute between a Brahmin and a non-Brahmin[11].

Thus we see that the person and property of a Brahmin was

1. *Tai. Saṁ.* 2.6, 10, 2.
2. *Śat. Br.* 13.3, 5.3.
3. *Yāj B. Kāṭhaka Saṁ.* 3.1.7; *Kapi Saṁ.* 47.7., *Tai. Br.* 3.2.8 12.
4. *Śat. Br.* 13.3, 1, 1; 5.4.1.
5. *Ait. Br.* 7.15.
6. *Pañ. Br.* 14.6.8.
7. *V.S.* IX. 40; X. 18; *T.S.* I. 8.10;12; *K.S.* XV. 7; *M.S.* II.6.9.
8. *Śat. Br.* 13.5, 4, 29; 6.2.18; 7.1 13.
9. *Śat. Br.* 5.4, 2, 3.
10. Ibid.
11. *Tai. Saṁ.* 2.5,11.9.

held inviolate against all threats. The king was enjoined upon to safeguard all the privileges of this jāti. Even in matters of litigation, the judgement had to be in his favour, except in cases of fraud and treason. In these cases, he could not escape punishment. But we do not know if such cases were frequent.

2

Brahmins in the Pre-Mauryan Age

WHO IS A BRAHMIN :

In the previous chapter we have seen that in the Brahmanic texts Brahminhood is by and large determined by birth[1]. Now "the separation between the Brahmins and Kṣatriyas, so far as the priestly functions were concerned, was complete. There is no Viśvāmitra in this period passing from the kingly rank to the priestly"[2]. These texts reveal them largely as Brahmins by birth[3], although inter-marriage, introduction of highly cultured people from new areas etc., also added to their numbers[4]. In addition to birth, these works also take into account the virtues that could raise a person not only within his own *varṇa*, but also transfer him to the higher ones[5].

A REAL BRAHMIN :

Though some Upaniṣadas determine the Varṇa of a person from his birth in a particular family, they do not seem to ignore his meritorious qualities. According to the Bṛhadāraṇyaka

1. *Ait. Br* VIII. 24, *Tai. Br.* 1.4.4.
2. Dutt (N.K.) : op. cit., pp. 88-89.
3. Weber quoted by Senart (E.), *Caste in India*, 1930, p. 110.
   The author quotes : "According to an eminent authority, Herr Weber, the organisation of castes is fully developed at this period of the Brāhmaṇas; from that date we find ourselves confronted by the same situation which appears to us idealised and codified in the law of Manu..."
4. Sharma (R S.), '*Śūdras*', p. 62.
5. *Ch. Up.* 4.4.1.; *Vas. Dh.* S. 6.23-24.

Upaniṣad, a true Brahmin is one who is devoted to Brahma.[1] The story of Satyakāma Jābāla, as narrated in the Chhāndogya Upaniṣad shows that at times the individual merit of a person could override the barrier of birth.[2] The remark of the sage Gotama is worth noticing here : "None but a (true) brahmin would thus speak out".[3] We also read that those with good conduct will be reborn in good families, i e. in the family of a Brahmin or a Kṣatriya. But those of evil conduct will be born as dogs, pigs or cāṇḍālas.[4]

The Sūtras also stress the cultivation of similar virtues. The Vasiṣṭha Dharma Sūtra (henceforth Vasiṣṭha) accepts a person as a Brahmin if he possesses such virtues as yoga, penance, selfrestraint, charity, knowledge, purity, education, science, and a belief in gods.[5] Again, one who is neither good nor bad; neither not well-heard nor well-heard; neither knowing any good or a bad event[6] is called a true Brahmin. Long enimity, jealously, falsehood, abusing a Brahmin, back-biting, and cruelty are described as the qualities that degrade a Brahmin to the status of a Śūdra.[7] Virtues common to all the *varṇas* are truthfulness, absence of anger, charity, non-violence, procreation, the honouring of the manes, gods and guests and compassion towards animals.[8] Underlying the importance of good conduct *Vasiṣṭha* says, "What pleasure could the Vedas, along with their six aṅgas and all sacrifices, bring to a Brahmin devoid of good conduct; it will be like a beautiful wife for a blind man".[9] The wealth of a Brahmin is said to be his good actions performed at a proper time and place and also purity.[10] Another source declares a Brahmin to be Agni and quotes in

1. *Br. Up.* III. 5.1; 8.10.
2. *Ch. Up.* 4.4.1.
3. Ibid. 4.4.5.
4. Ibid. 5.10.7.
5. *Vas. Dh.* 5.6.23.
6. *Vas. Dh.* 5.6.44.
7. Ibid 5.6.24.
8. Ibid. 5.4.5.
9. Ibid. 5.6.4.
10. *Vas. Dh. S.* ii 28.

support the Śruti that Agni is Brahmin[1].

For Vasiṣṭha, Brahmins acquiring learning through unbroken tradition and believing in the authority of the *Śruti*, are the *Śiṣṭha Brāhmaṇas*[2].

The term '*Mahā-Brahma*' is also found in the Pāli texts and denotes an eminent Brāhmaṇa who has acquired self realization.[3] The Bodhisattva Nārada is referred to as a *Mahā-Brahma*.[4] The Mataṅga Jātaka clearly refers to the superior position of such a Brahma.[5] According to the Buddha, a true Brahmin has both good conduct and knowledge.[6]

Pāṇini also 'refers to the *bhāva* (nature) and *Karma* (conduct) which should characterise a Brahmin'.[7] These are indicated in a derivative expression, *brāhmaṇya*. To indicate the duties and norms for which *varṇa* stands, Kātyāyana applies this rule to the four varṇas collectively.[8] Pāṇini uses the two terms *brahman* and *brāhmaṇa* for the *varṇa* (*Brāhmaṇajāti*).[9] . He distinguishes the two terms by taking the former in a cultural context as shown in the derivative *brāhmaṇya* (*Brahmaṇe hitam*) and reserving the term *brāhmaṇa* for caste based on birth (son of a *Brāhmaṇa*)[10]. In a discourse[11] the venerable Kaccāna lays bare the difference between the ancient and modern Brahmins. The ancient sages were foremost among the virtuous and had conquered wrath. They took delight both in the norm and meditation. On the other hand, the Brahmins of his day, drunk with the pride of birth, walk wrongfully, are engaged in

1. Vas. Dh. S. ii. 28.
2. Ibid. 6.43.
3. Faüsboll, The Mahānārada Karsapa Jātaka, VI. 242.
4. Ibid.
5. Faüsboll, *The Mataṅga-Jātaka, IV.* 377.
6. Saṁyutta, N. I. 7.8.8., p. 166.
7. Pāṇini, V. 1.124. quoted by V. S. Agrawala, *India as known to Pāṇini*, pp. 75-77.
   Guṇavacana Brāhmaṇādibhyaḥ Karmaṇi ca.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
11. *Saṁ. N.* Vol. 3.35.132.135, pp. 107-111.

useless acts viz. penance without restraining the senses and are doing things for some trifling gain[1]. At another place the Buddha says that one "living by priestly craft is a celebrant and not a Brahmin"[2]. A true Brahmin is free from wrath, pride, lust, hate and passions. He is spotless, tamed, tolerant, patient, and cleansed[3].

Obviously all the Brahmins did not conform to this high level of moral conduct. The Buddhist works show that like others, the Brahmins also had good, bad, learned, foolish and greedy persons among them. The Aṅguttara Nikāya[4] classifies the Brahmins under five heads, i.e. *Brahmasamo*, *Devasamo*, *Mariyādā*, *Saṁbhinna Mariyādā* and *Cāṇḍāla Brāhmaṇa*. The *Brahmasama* were those who were of pure descent, who were properly educated, who were observing chastity, studied the Vedas and other works, earned their livelihood by alms, and renounced the world in the last days of their lives. The second type differed from the first insofar as it took to worldly life after completing the period of *brahmacarya*. The third type of Brahmins carried out the customs of their own caste while living as householders throughout their lives. The fourth type of Brahmins married outside their caste after having transgressed the relevant rules. The main aim of their married life was to have progeny. The last type did not practise their duties and were engaged in functions of Cāṇḍālas such as agriculture, trade, cattle-breeding, fighting as soldiers, government service. A Jātaka tale, while describing the nature of a Brahmin says that just as the ocean is ever thirsty for water, a king is always eager for more territory, ...so a Brahmin is never satisfied with his learning[5]. A Brahmin acquires knowledge of the Vedas and legendary lore, yet insatiate, he craves for more knowledge[6]. Elsewhere a Brahmin is described as

1. Saṁ. N. III. 35.132.135, pp. 107-111.
2. M.N. II. 48 2.4 , p. 465.
3. Ibid, II. 48.2.5.61, p. 465. See also the *Vinaya Piṭaka*, IV, f. 4, *DN.*, I.4.3.12, pp. 103-6.
4. *Aṅguttara. N.* 5.20.2.2. p. 468.
5. Faüsboll, J.V. No. 536, p. 412 (*Kunāla-Jātaka*).
6. Faüsboll, J. V. No. 536. p. 412.

devoted to truth[1]. The Jaina canons also declare that "One does not become a *Śramaṇa* by tonsure nor a *Brāhmaṇa* by enchanting the sacred syllable '*Om*', nor a *Muni* by living in a wood, nor a *Tāpasa* by wearing clothes of Kuśa and bark. One becomes a *Śramaṇa* by equanimity of mind, a *Brāhmaṇa* by chastity, a *Muni* by knowledge and *Tāpasa* by penance[2].

Thus all the sources, the Brahmanical, the Buddhist and the Jaina, lay stress on the supremacy of the moral qualities in the make up of a Brahmin. The difference lies in the Brahmanical sources laying emphasis on birth as the first condition for a Brahmin, although even there exceptions have been found.

This gives us some idea of the notions concerning the Brahmins. We will now present data regarding, Brahmins, beginning with their physical features.

PHYSICAL FEATURES :

(*i*) *Complexion* : The term *Varṇa* is often translated as colour on the presumption that the Aryans who entered India were white in complexion as against the original inhabitants of India, generally designated as *Dāsas*, *Dasyus*, the black or dark-skinned peoples[3]. This colour distinction is sometimes also applied to the fourfold division, viz. the Brahmins, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras[4].

According to the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad[5] there are three *guṇas*, viz. *sattva* (purity), *rajas* (virility) and *tamas* (dullness), which are symbolically represented by the three colours white, red and black in that order. Like other things phenomenal, the social classes represent varying grouping of these *guṇas*. Hence this theory of *guṇas* suggests that the Brahmins are those

1. Dhammapada, XXVI.
2. Jain (J.C.), *Life in Ancient India as Depicted in the Jain Canons*, p. 141.
3. Macdonell and Keith, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 275. Dasyus are described as having three heads. So they are not human beings.
4. Joshi (L.), Rajwade Lekha Saṅgraha, p. 62-64.
5. Śvetāśvatara VI. 5; Mbh. XII. 181, 4-10

in whom *sattva* is predominent; the Kṣatriyas have the *rajas* as the predominent quality and in the Vaiśyas *tamas* predominates. In the Śūdras not one of these qualities is highly developed. These two, the character (*guṇa*) and the kind of work determine the class to which a person belongs[1]. But it is seen that 'each person is a mixture of those characters and is produced from *tamas*, through *rajas*, to *sattva* and beyond, for the goal of spiritual evolution is transcendence of *guṇas*[2].

The Sūtras, however, do not speak of the colour-distinction among the members of the higher *varṇas*[3], although they do differentiate between the colour of the three higher *varṇas* on the one hand and that of the Śūdra *varṇa* on the other[4]. In one of these Sūtras we are told that the sin committed by a Brahmin in serving a dark-coloured person for twentyfour hours, can be expiated by omitting three consecutive meals out of four and by performing ablutions, thrice a day over a period of three years.[5]

The theory of colour also gets support[6] from the statement of Patañjali[7] that a Brahmin can be recognised out of a crowd by his white complexion. He further says, "When one has seen a certain black (person), of the colour of black beans (Māṣa), seated in the market place, one definitely concludes without inquiry that he is not a Brahmin, one is convinced thereof"[8]. It means that at the time of Patañjali the complexion of Brahmins was white. He says that 'Take him to be a Brahmin who is of white complexion and the rest as non-Brahmin'[9]. In this way besides birth and the conduct, Patañjali has intro-

1. Bhagavadgītā. IV. 13. According to the Mahāparinibbasutta, the gods as well as well as the Licchavi brothers are coloured according to their function. Moreover colours of peoples are not corresponding to their skin colour, but to the emblematic colour of their class.
2. Mahadevan (T.M.P.), *Essays in East-West Philosophy*, p. 325.
3. Ramgopal, *India of Vedic Kalpa-sūtras*, pp. 114-15.
4. Ibid.
5. *Bau. Dh. S.* 2.1.2.3; *Āp Dh. S.* 1.9.27.11; *Vas. Dh. S.* 18.18. See also *Nirukta*. XII.13.
6. Patañjali, *Mahābhāṣya*, Vol. 2.2.6, p. 432.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.

duced the element of colour in determining the caste of a Brahmin, without however suggesting any means to explain the colour-differences among the Brahmins. On the other hand we know that persons like Vyāsa and Cāṇakya were swarthy. It is often stated that Yama and Agni, who are Brahmins, have *śyama* and red complexion respectively[1]. That is probably why Joshi has suggested that the word *Śuklabhāsvara*[2] as used by Patañjali and Manu should not be interpreted as white but as 'white brilliant' or 'cleanbrilliant'. Therefore, most probably Patañjali and others used this word in the second sense, i e., 'clean-brilliant'.[3]

This distinction among the *varṇas* on the basis of colour makes sense only if we take it to refer to Brahmins of certain areas, among whom no inter-mixing had taken place. Because, intermixing had been a fact from early on.

The process can be noticed from the Ṛgveda itself. The word *Vadhū* in the Ṛgveda[4], especially in the Dānastuti portion, denotes a woman carried away (*Vah*) by force, hence a dāsī; she could be taken to bed and was sometimes made a wife (*Patnī*).[5] There are also explicit passages wherein it is said that a Brahmin having set up the sacred fire (*Agnimcaya*) should not go to bed with a *rāmā*[6] (explained by commentator as a *Kṛṣṇavarṇā nārī*). Some children born of such unions could have been swarthy in complexion. We meet one such in the seer Mahidāsa Aitareya who was the son of Itarā, a dāsī[7]. The seer

1. Joshi (L.), op. cit., 63-64.
   See also *Vas. Dh. S.* 30.2-3.
   Nirukta. 10.2.20.
   A Greek Physician named Ktesias (415 B.C.) says that the Hindus were of Black complexion (This can be understood as referring to some particular area).
2. Joshi (L), op. cit., pp. 62-64.
3. Ibid.
4. Chanana (D R.) : op. cit., p. 151, fn. 21.
   "Here we may also remark that in the opinion of Louis Renou, the word *Vadhū*, signifies, at least in the Dānastuti part of the Ṛgveda, a woman carried away by force hence a *dāsī*".
5. Ibid., op. cit., p. 19.
6. Mukunda Jhā : *Nirukta.* XII. 12. p. 503; *Vas. Dh. S.* 18, 17-8. *Apastamba* (1-9-27, 10-1) says that such a woman is non-Aryan, an-ārya.
7. Mookerji, op. cit., p. 52.

Dīrghatamas, is also described as dark complexioned and born of a dāsī[1]. In the list of the Vedic *ṛṣis*, some at least among those, who carry their mother's names have been similarly the children of similar women-slaves. Even assuming that only persons of lower varṇas could have been dark in colour, we have also to consider the Sūtra rule allowing a person of higher *Varṇa* to beget children on women of the next lower *varṇa*.[2]

Therefore an intermixing must have taken place, leading to commingling of colours, presuming that in early times, colour distinction was well established.

(*ii*) *Dress* : The Sūtra works do not prescribe any special dress for a Brahmin. Probably it cosisted of two pieces of cloth, one the *Uttarīya* or the upper garment and the other, the *Antarīya* or the lower garment[3] with a girdle[4]. Ladies also used these clothes[5]. That a turban was the ceremonial head-wear is clear from the Śāṅkhāyana Gṛhya Sūtra (henceforth Śāṅkhāyana) where we are told that a student is to wear a turban while the teacher recites to him the *Āraṇyaka* texts[6]. A turban is always mentioned in the dress and general outfit of a *Snātaka*. In one of the Gṛhyasūtras[7] a red turban is prescribed for the priest.

The Sūtras prescribe special dresses for the students of different castes, which could make caste-wise distinction quite easy.

The Buddhist canonical works mention certain Brahmins who were leading a very luxurious life on the grants of the kings. One of these Brahmins, named Jānusoṇi, used to ride in a chariot all clad in white garments[8].

(*iii*) *Ornaments* : Both men and women were fascinated by

1. *Pañc. Br.* XIV. 11.17.
2. *Vas, Dh. S.* 1 24, *Pār. G. S.* 1.4.8-11.
3. *Śāṅ. G. S.* II. 1,2.4.5. *Āśv. G. S.* 1.19.8. *Pār. G. S.* 1.4, 12-13, *Hir. G. S.* 1 10,5; *Bau. D. S.* 1.3,5,2,6. *Vas. D. S.* XII. 14.
4. Ibid.
5. Apte (V.M), *Social and Religious life in the Gṛhyasūtras*, p. 55.
6. Ibid. *Bau. D. S.* I,3,5,2-6. It exhorts a *Snātaka* to wear an undergarment, an upper garment, a turban and a pair of shoes.
7. *Sat. G. S.* 17.2.7, See also *Kāt. Ś. S.* 22 3-14.
8. *Maij. N.* 2.49.6.13., p. 481.

ornaments and jewellery.[1] "Man may have tried to replace one common article by another of more extraordinary variety but he has never been able to shake off his love for ornaments"[2]. Men and women used to wear ornaments of gold and other metals[3], considered extremely auspicious on festive occasions[4]. In the *Sīmantonnayana* ceremony[5] and in the Brahma form of marriage[6], the bride wore golden ornaments. They were probably worn according to seasons, as stated by Baudhyāyana.[7] Students used to wear ear-rings (*karṇa-Veṣṭakau*), jewels (*maṇis*) and other golden ornaments at the *Samāvartana* ceremony.[8] According to the Āpastamba, a snātaka wears a golden jewel round his neck and ties a pellet (*maṇi*) of *Badara* wood to his left arm.[9] We learn that at the *Aśvamedha* sacrifice a thousand golden jewels, a thousand silver jewels and a thousand pearls used to be given (to the priests)[10]. Ear-rings were worn by the sacrificers at *Śrauta* sacrifices[11]. We give, here under, details of some of these ornaments.

The *Niṣka*, which was worn round neck, was quite popular with women.[12] It was generally made of gold but sometimes also of silver.[13] The *Kātyāyana Śrauta sūtra*[14] also speaks of another ornament named *rukma* which could be in gold or in silver.[15] A *sraj* (chain) of gold was also worn. The Kātyāyana

1. Rai Govind Chandra, *Studies in the Development of Ornaments and Jewellery in Proto-Historic India*, Introduction, p. IX.
2. Ibid.
3. Ram Gopal, op. cit., p. 159.
4. Ibid.
5. *Śāṅ. G. S.* 1.22, 16-17.
6. *Āśv G. S.* 1.6.1., *Vas. D. S.* 1.30; *Bau. D. S.* 1.11,20,2; *Āp. D. S.* II.5.11,17.
7. *Bau. G. S.* II. 10.2.8.
8. *Śāṅ. G. S.* III.1.18; *Pār. G. S.* 1.6-26; *Āp. G. S.* V. 12 9.
9. *Āp. G. S* V. 12.8.
10. *Āp. Ś. S.* XX. 15.9.
11. *Āp. Ś. S.* XIX. 23.11; *Bau. Ś. S.* XIII. 32.
12. *Bhār. G. S.* II.7; 39,2; *Kāt. Ś. S.* XIV. 3.30; XX. 1.12; *Āśv. Ś. S.* III.9; *Śāṅ G. S.* III.1.7; *Pāṇ.* V. 1.20.
13. *Kāt. Ś. S.* XXII.18.
14. Ibid. XVI. 5.1.
15. *Āp. Ś. S*, XX. 2 5; *Bau. Ś. S.* X. 57.

lays down that all the priests, the sacrificer and his wife should wear golden chains before the extraction of Soma-juice at the *Vājapeya* sacrifice[1]. It is also laid down that a snātaka should not wear a scentless wreath but may wear a golden chain.[2] Flower garlands (*mālābhāriṇi*) were also freely worn[3]. A flower-garland was worn by a snātaka at the *samāvartana* ceremony[4]. A garland of *Madhūka* flowers was tied round the neck of the bride at the time of marriage[5].

Besides referring to *Karṇikā*[6] (ear-ornament), *Graiveyaka*[7] (a torque), *Mālā* (garland[8] of flowers) and *Niṣka*[9] (a necklace of gold), Pāṇini mentions three kinds of head ornaments viz., *Kumbā*[10] (a cone), *srag*[11] (garland of flowers for the head), and *Lalāṭikā*[12] (a kind of *benā*). Pāṇini has also referred to *Aṅgulīya*[13] (finger-ring). *Lohitamaṇi*[14] (red garnet), *sasya*[15] (green jasper) and *Viḍūra*[16], were the precious stones, used in ornaments by people in the days of Pāṇini.

(*iv*) *Language* : Language plays an important role in the day today dealings of men, being the easiest means of inter-communication among them. Now the question arises as to what language did the Aryans use in the Vedic period ? According to S. Levi, the secular literature was first composed in some Primary Prakrit, while the sacred literature was composed in the Vedic language which was different from ordinary speech[17]. But

1. *Kāt. Ś. S.* XIV. 1.23.
2. *Go. G. S.* III. 5.16.
3. *Pāṇini*, VI. 3,65.
4. *Hir. G. S.* I.11.4., *Bhār. G. S.* 11.18; 50.12, *Pār. G. S.* II 6.23-24.
5. *Śāṅ. G. S.* 1.12.9.
6. *Pāṇini*. IV.3.65.
7. Ibid. IV,3,62.
8. Ibid. VI.3.65.
9. Ibid. V.1.20.
10. Ibid, III.3.105.
11. Ibid. V.2.121.
12. Ibid, IV.3,105.
13. Ibid. IV.3.32.
14. Ibid. V.4.30.
15. Ibid. V.2.68.
16. Ibid. IV 3,84.
17. Levi (S), quoted by Keith : *Classical Sanskrit Literature*, p.1.

this theory is untenable. As Keith observes. "The Vedic language as we find it in the Ṛgveda and in the later *Saṁhitās* is already a poetical and hieratic language, which was doubtless different even from the speech of the priests in ordinary life and still further removed from that of the ruling and subject classes, not to mention the slaves or aborigines. The language of the Brāhmaṇas, the Āraṇyakas and the Upaniṣads is equally hieratic speech; it represents the language used by the priests primarily at the sacrifice, then in speculations based on the sacrifice, and extending ultimately beyond its immediate limits, not the language of every day conversation either among the priests themselves or in intercourse with others"[1]. There is no doubt that classical Sanskrit developed out of the Vedic language. That Sanskrit language was in use as early as in Yāska's time (seventh century B.C.) is clear from the fact that Yāska has derived Vedic words from the popular roots[2]. He speaks of this classical dialect as *Bhāṣā*, speech, in distinction from Vedic[3]. "Again Sanskrit cannot have been a mere literary and school language, because there are early traces of its having had dialectic variations"[4]. These dialectic variations are mentioned by Yāska, Pāṇini, Kātyāyana and Patañjali. For instance, Yāska says that the verbal form *Śavati* is used by the people of Kamboja country, while the noun *śava* alone is used among Aryans[5]. Pāṇini also calls it a *Bhāṣā* and gives elaborate rules of accentuation. Certain idiomatic usages are also referred to by Pāṇini[6]. Patañjali also refers to an interesting incident in which the Asuras were defeated on account of their mispronouncing the word *he arayaḥ*[7]. He also mentions a discussion between a *Sūta* and a grammarian over the derivation of the

1. Keith, *Classical Sanskrit Literature* p. 2.
2. Yāska : Nirukta 2.2.
3. Macdonell (A. A.), *History*, op. cit., 18.
4. Ibid.
5. *Nirukta*, 2.2.
6. Upadhyaya, (Baladeva), *Sanskrit Sāhitya Kā Itihāsa* p. 24-25. The words like daṇḍā-daṇḍi occur in the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* of Pāṇini.
7. Patañjali, *Mahābhāṣya*, I Āhnika (Trans. K. C. Chatterji), Calcutta, 1957.

word *Pravetā*.[1] This shows that Sanskrit was spoken and understood by people.

Even in the time of the Buddha education was in the hands of the Brahmins who were well-versed in the Vedic lore. They must have instructed their pupils through the medium of Sanskrit. In the Jātakas occurs a very interesting story about two Cāṇḍāla boys, who disguised as Brahmins, learnt the śāstras in Sanskrit for some time, but were caught while using a form of Prakrit and chased out[2].

RITUAL FOR A BRAHMIN-CHILD :

A Brahmin-child had to undergo certain rituals before he could be sent to a teacher. Among these, let us take naming first.

(*i*) *Nāmakaraṇa* : The Sūtras also draw a line of demarcation between the members of three castes in regard to the performance of several sacraments such as the *Nāmakaraṇa cūḍākaraṇa, Upanayana and Samāvartana*. While describing the *Nāmakaraṇa* ceremony, the *Pāraskara Gṛhya Sūtra* says that name of a Brahmin should end in Śarman, that of a Kṣatriya in *Varman* and that of a Vaiśya in *Gupta*[3]. This ceremony generally took place on the tenth or twelfth day after birth[4]. The Śāṅkhāyana however, enjoins that second name should be pleasing to the Brahmins. The Vārāha[5] would like a Brahmin to have two names; one being given immediately after a child's birth, but kept secret. The public name was given on the eleventh day.

(*ii*) *Cūḍākaraṇa* : The *Cūḍākaraṇa*[6] is to be performed in the second or third year of his age for a Brahmin child, in the

1. Upadhyaya (B), op. cit., 26.
2. Faüsboll, *Citta Saṁbhūta Jātaka*, IV No. 498, p. 391.
3. *Pār. G. S.* I.17.4.
4. *Baudh. G. S.* II.1.23. The Gṛhyasūtras of *Śāṅkhāyana, Bhāradvāja, Mānava, Pāraskara*, and *Āpastamba* prescribe the performance of this ceremony on the eleventh day after the birth of the child.
5. *Vārāha G. S.* 3.1.
6. *Śāṅkh. G. S.* I.28.1-4. The *Gobhila*, the *Khādira*, the *Āpastamba*, the *Kāṭhaka* and the *Mānava* Gṛhyasūtras prescribe the performance of the

fifth year for a Kṣatriya child, and in the seventh year for a Vaiśya child. The same holds for initiation[1].

(*iii*) *The establishing of the fire* : The Śrauta Sūtras lay down rules regarding the establishing of fire. According to the Āpastamba[2] a Brahmin should kindle the sacrificial fire in the spring, a Kṣatriya in summer, or autumn, a Vaiśya in winter and a Rathakāra in the Rainy season, or the men of all the *Varṇas* may establish it (agni) in autumn[3]. In addition, the Śrauta Sūtras prescribe *Gāyatrī* metre for establishing a fire for a Brahmin, *Triṣṭubh* for a Kṣatriya and *Jagatī* for a Vaiśya[4]. Besides, these authorities also lay down the measurement of the altar. Thus the *Āpastamba* declares that the altar of the Brahmin for the *Āhavanīya* fire should be of eight steps, of eleven steps for a Kṣatriya and twelve steps for a Vaiśya.[5] The mode of giving offerings varied with the castes. By reciting *Agne vratapate vrataṁ cariṣyāmīti'*, he (a Brahmin) offers the offerings to the Brahmins. And reciting 'Vātyo varatapate, Āditya vratapate, vratānām vratapate vrataṁ cariṣyāmi", Rājanya and Vaiśya present the offerings to the Brahmins. Or the Brahmins offer them with all the mantras.[6] The mode of offering the oblation also differs. The sacrificer offers four oblations in fire one by one. He pours the first oblation to the god Agni. He should pour the second oblation, if he is a Brahmin sacrificer, to Āditya, Agni and Indra. Or he may offer it by saying, *Agniṣomīya*. If the sacrificers are Rājanyas and Vaiśyas, then they should pour the first oblation for Indra and the *Viśvedevāḥ* respectively[7]. A Brahmin who has acquired glory, and is en-

rite in the course of the third year from birth. The *Baudhāyana Gṛhyasūtra* and *Pāraskara Gṛhya-sūtra* allow the option that the Cūḍākarman may be performed in the first or in the third year after the birth of the child.

1. See infra. 72-74.
2. *Āp. Ś.S.* 5.1.3.17
   Śāṅ.Ś.S. prescribes Rainy season or autumn for Vaiśya. 2.1.1.5.
3. *Āp, Ś.S.* 5.1.3.19.
4. Ibid. 5.2.6.2.
5. Ibid. 1.4.3.
6. Ibid. 4.1.3.2-3.
7. *Śāṅkh. Ś.S.* 2.3.4-7 .

dowed with Vedic knowledge and a village chief and a Rājanya should keep the fire and perform the *Agnihotra-rite*[1]. According to Āpastamba[2] a person establishing the fire under the *Kṛittikā* constellation, becomes foremost among persons possessed of divine lustre; one kindling it under the *Rohiṇī* excels all; one who performs this act under the *Mṛgaśīrṣa* attains divine lustre and becomes desirous of sacrifices. Under the *Phālguna* and *Uttarā* constellations, the Brahmin obtains children and food respectively.

(iv) *Upanayana* : Education has been always the most important aspect of Indian life in the past as well as in the present. This fact is quite evident from the allotment of a special period for it i.e. the *Brahmacarya*[3] in the total span of man's life, said to be of full one hundred years[4]. Altekar has rightly pointed out that the educational system is closely connected with civilization[5]. "It was well recognised that education was the foundation upon which the whole edifice of the moral culture of the individual was to be built"[6].

UPANAYANA RITE :

The education of an Indian started with the *Upanayana* ceremony. This ritual is dealt with in detail in the Gṛhyasūtras as also in the Dharma-Sūtras. It is so named because in this a child belonging to the Brahmin, or Kṣatriya or Vaiśya *Varṇas* is taken to the teacher, by his parents for initiation and education. According to the *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad* a student should approach the teacher with the word, *Upaimyahaṁ bhavantam*, 'I approach you, sir.'[7] The Muṇḍakopaniṣad enjoins that a student should approach the teacher with some faggots for the sake of know-

1. *Śāṅkh. Ś.S.* 2.7.1-5.
2. *Āp. Ś.S.* 1.3.2-13.
3. Ibid. 2.9.21.1; *Gau. Dh. S* 3.2; *Vas. Dh.S.* 7.1.2.
4. *Iśopaniṣad.*2.
5. Altekar (A.S.), *Education in Ancient India*, in B. C. Law Commemoration Volume, pt. I, pp. 128-33.
6. Valavalkar (P.N.H.), *Hindu Social Institution.* p.122.
7. *Br. Up.* VI. 2.7.

ledge[1]. The teacher then enquires about the name, *Varṇa* and family of the student, as happened in the case of Satyakāma Jābāla[2]. On such occasions one should go to a teacher following the injunctions of *śāstras*[3]. The teacher asks such student to repeat the formula : 'I have come for *brahmacarya*; kindly take me near. May I be a *brahmacārin* impelled by the god Savitrī"[4]. Thus, 'The *Upanayana* is a *saṁskāra* enjoined by the *śruti* for the persons desirous of acquiring knowledge. A Brāhmaṇa text declares that Sāvitrī is learnt for (the study of) all the Vedas[5]. In the days of the Upaniṣads, the child's education perhaps began at home and his first teacher was his father. In the Chhāndogyopaniṣad we are told that Śvetaketu received his first lesson from his father and thereafter left for learning the *brahmavidyā*[6].

EDUCATION :

(*a*) *Place of Education* : Usually education was imparted in the hermitages, sometimes situated far away[7]. The Dharma Sūtra also states that an initiated *Brahmacārin* should live in the house of the *Ācārya*[8]. In the Buddhist literature also we have numerous references to students who travelled all the way to Taxila[9], Vārāṇasī, Rājagṛha, Kosala and other places.

(*b*) *Period of Education* : As regards the period of education, for the Upaniṣads studentship lasts up to twelve years[10] though it may be continued up to one's last breath[11]. If any student wanted to live with the teacher after completing his education, he should do so, subject to his teacher's permission and after

1. *Muṇḍ. up.* 1.2.12.
2. *Ch. up.* IV.4,4.
3. *Muṇḍ. up.* 1.1.3.
4. *Hir.G.S.* 1.5.2.
5. *Āp. Dh.S.* I,1.1,9-10.
6. *Ch. Up.* 5.3.1.
7. *Br. Up.* 3.3.1; 3.7.1; *Tai. Up.* 1.4.3.
8. *Āp. Dh.S.* 1.1.2.11.
9. Faüsboll, *Jāt.* I No. 117 p. 431; I.No. 149 p. 505;I. No. 120, p.436.
10. *Chā. Up.* 4.10.1.
11. *Br. Up.* 2.23.2.

embracing the *Vānaprastha* way of life[1]. According to Gautama[2] also, the period of studentship is twelve years which is considered sufficient to master one Veda only[3] but student desirous of mastering all the four Vedas, devoted twelve years to the study of each Veda. The total would thus come to forty eight years[4]. The Buddhist and Jaina works do not seem to mention any rule about the period of education. Probably they followed the same pattern.

(*c*) *Age of the student* : As regards the age of pupil it is said that the Brahmin, the Kṣatriya and Vaiśya pupils should be initiated (*Upanayet*) at the age of *eighth*, *eleventh* and *twelfth* year respectively[5]. The Pāraskara says that *Upanayana* may be performed at any time considered auspicious by different families[6]. According to some of the Gṛhyasūtras years are to be counted from the time of the conception of the child.[7] But the Āśvalāyana and Pāraskara also optionally allow the time to be calculated from either the conception or the birth of the child[8]. The *Śāṅkhāyana*, Bhāradvāja, Hiraṇyakeśin, and Kāṭhaka prescribe that the *Upanayana* ceremony of a Brahmin, Kṣatriya and Vaiśya may be performed in the seventh, ninth, tenth, respectively[9]. But for the fulfilment of certain desires, the children should start their studies a little earlier; the Brahmin in the *fifth* year of his age, the Kṣatriya in the *sixth* and Vaiśya in the *eighth*[10]. According to the Jaiminīya a Brahmin desirous of spiritual lustre[11] and long life[12] should be initiated in the fifth

1. *Ch. Up.* 2.2.3.1.
2. *Gau. Dh. S.* 1.2.51.
3. Ibid.
4. *Āp. Dh. S.* 1.1.2.12.
5. *Śāṅ. G.S.* ii. 1,1-9; *ĀŚV.G.S.* 1,19,1-7; *Pār.G.S.* ii, 5,36,38; *Go.G.S.* ii, 10, 1-4.
6. *Pār.G.S.* ii,2.1-4.
7. *Śāṅ.G.S.* II.1.1.4.5, *Āśv. G.S.* 1.19,1.3.4; *Baud. G.S.* II.5.2; *Bhār.G.S.* I,1; 1,5; *Kh.G.S.* II.4,1,3,5; *Gau.Dh.S*, 1, 9.
8. *Āśv.G.S.* 1,19.1-2.
   Pār.G.S. II.2.1.
9. *Śāṅ.G.S.* II,1,3; *Bhār.G.S.* I.1; *Hir.G.S.* I.1,1-3; *Kāṭh. G.S.* 41,1-3.
10. *Àp. Dh.S.* I,1,1,1,19-20; *Gāu.* i,6.
11. *Jai. G.S.* 1,12.
12. *Bau. G.S.* II.5,5; *Āp.Dh.S.* 1,1,1,20-26; *Vaikh.G.S.* II.3.

year and in the ninth year respectively. Baudhāyana and Āpastamba[1] prescribe that one should initiate a person desirous of spiritual lustre in his *seventh* year, a person desirous of long life in the *eighth* year, a person desirous of manly vigour in the *ninth* year, a person desirous of strength in the *eleventh* year, a person desirous of prosperity in the *fourteenth* year, a person having a *bhrātṛvya* (a rival) in the *fifteenth* year and a person desirous of all these objects in the *sixteenth* year. The maximum age enjoined for this rite does not expire till the *sixteenth* year in the case of a Brahmin, till the *twenty second* year in the case of a Kṣatriya and *twenty fourth* in the case of a Vaiśya and those who fail to perform the *Upanayana* upto this age are declared to be *Patita Sāvitrīkas* i.e. fallen from their right of learning the *Sāvitrī* verse; they become *Vrātyas*.[2] These *Vrātyas* should not be initiated, should not be taught by any teacher. A Brahmin should not perform sacrifice for them, nor should entertain any relation with them.[3] S. K. Das sees in these differences of age, the supposed intellectual superiority of the Brahmins,[4] but Prof. Valavalkar demurs.[5] To him this difference is due to the nature of the duties to be performed. Thus "the Brahmin's duties of life were centred round learning and teaching; the earlier he started to learn, the better it would help him to become a master of as much knowledge as possible"[6], and that 'it would be quite natural to expect a hereditary predisposition for a Brahmin child to develop tendencies to learn earlier owing to his family and social surroundings than it could be for the Kṣatriya and the Vaiśya, at the age when either of them is called upon to start the studies".[7] Other scholars

1. *Bau. G. S.* II. 5,5.
2. *Śāṅ.G.S.* II,1,6:13; *ĀŚV.G.S.* I,19,5-7, *Go.G.S.* II.10.3-5; *Kh.G.S.* II.4,2,4,6; *Kāṭh.G.S.* 41.4.; *Bau.G.S.* II.5,3-4; *Āp.Dh.S.* I,1,27, *Gāu. Dh.S.* 1,14-16.
3. *Śāṅ.G.S.* II.1.9-13.
4. Das S. K., *Educational system of Ancient Hindus*, p. 72. He says, "It seems probable .....that the difference in age was to emphasize the supposed intellectual superiority of the Brahmin who was thus to begin the study at a youger age than his non-Brahmin fellows."
5. Valavalkar (P.N.H.), op. cit., pp. 105.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.

attribute it to the fancy and conceit of the Brahmins.[1] As the number of letters in the Sāvitrī mantras of the Brahmins, Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas happened to be eight, eleven and twelve, the Brahmin took fancy to them and determined the respective ages of the boys of the three upper classes for being initiated at eight, eleven, twelve[2] years. This argument is not tenable as Baudhāyana recommends any year between eight and sixteen for a Brahmin boy.[3] Pandey attributes this early initiation of a Brahmin child to the superiority complex of the Brahmins.[4] The plausible reason seems to be that a Brahmin child had his education from his father at his home, so early initiation suited him while the children of their castes had to leave the parents for education which was not possible at a very young age.[5]

In several Jātaka stories the end of boyhood is given as the period for the commencement of the studies.[6] The Brahmin as well as the Kṣatriya youth were considered grown up at sixteen.[7] In one Jātaka tale we are told that a certain *Purohita* sent his son to Taxila on seeing his extraordinary beauty in his sixteenth year.[8]

(*d*) *Season fit for Upanayana* : In addition to prescribing different ages, some of the Gṛhyasūtras specify different seasons in which *Upanayana* for the boys of different castes should be solemnised, The Baudhāyana states that the teacher should initiate a Brahmin in spring, a Rājanya in summer, a Vaiśya in autumn, a *Rathakāra* (chariot maker) in the rainy season or all of them in spring.[9] The Bhāradvāja[10] enjoins that he should initiate a Brahmin in spring, a Rājanya in summer or winter (*Hemanta*), a Vaiśya in autumn, a *Rathakāra* in the rainy sea-

1. Keay (*Ancient Indian Education*, p.29), quoted by Pandey (R.B.) in his *Hindu Saṁskāras*, pp. 198-201.
2. Pandey (R.B.) : *Hindu Saṁskāras*, pp. 198-201.
3. Ibid (Bau. 2.5.5.)
4. Ibid.
5. Pandey (R.B.), *Bau.* 2.5.5.
6. Fick, op. cit. 199. (Fausboll, *Tittira. J.* 1.431, l. p. 436, p. 505, II. p. 5, p. 2; III. 18, 171, 194, 228, V. 193, 227).
7. Ibid. 200.
8. Ibid. V. p. 127.
9. *Bau. G.S.* 2.5.6.
10. *Bhār. G.S.* 1.1.

son, or all of them in śiśira. The Āpastamba and Hiraṇyakeśin do not give any option.[1] According to Dr. Pandey[2] different seasons were symbolic of the temperament of different castes. The moderation of spring symbolized the moderate life of a Brahmin; the heat of the summer represented the fervour of a Kṣatriya; autumn, when commercial life in ancient India re-opened after the rainy season, suggested the wealth and prosperity of a Vaiśya, and easy time of rains indicated facility for a chariot-maker. The chariot-maker is assigned the rainy season also because during the rains, transport used to be, more or less, at a stand still, so he had no work but to devote himself to other pursuits.

STUDENTS' DRESS :

(*i*) *Upper Dress* : The Gṛhyasūtras and Dharmasūtras also prescribe a special dress for every student according to his caste. They lay down that a Brahmin, a Kṣatriya and a Vaiśya should wear the skin of black antelope (*Aiṇeyājina*) the skin of a spotted deer (*Rauravājina*) and the skin of a goat or a cow respectively as the upper garment.[3] The Kāṭhaka[4] prescribes the skin of a black antelope (*Eṇa*) for a Brahmin, that of a tiger for a Kṣatriya and that of a spotted deer (*Ruru*) for a Vaiśya. If the skins are scarce, a cow's skin may be used.[5]

(*ii*) *Lower dress* : The colour of the piece of cloth (*Vāsas*) to be worn by the student also varied according to caste. The Āśvalāyana[6] says that if they wear clothes, they should wear dyed ones i.e. a Brahmin should wear a reddish yellow (*Kāṣāya*) garment, a Kṣatriya garment should *Mañjiṣṭha* (dyed with madder) and a Vaiśya should put on a yellow (*Haridra*) one. The Pāraskara[7] prescribes the garments made of hemp (*śaṇa*),

1. *Hir. G. S.* 1.1.4. *Āp. G. S.* 4.10.4.
2. Pandey (R. B.), op. cit., pp. 216-17.
3. *Śāṅ. G. S.* II.1,2.4.5; *Āśv. G. S.* 1.19,8; *Pār. G. S.* II,5,17-19; *Bau. G. S.* II.5,16; *Hir. G. S.* 1.4.7.; *Gobh. G. S.* II.10,8.
4. *Kāṭh. G. S.* 41,13.
5. *Pār. G. S.* II.5,20.
6. *Āśv. G. S.* 1.19.9.
7. *Pār. G. S.* II.5,16.

linen (*Kṣauma*), and wool for a Brahmin, a Kṣatriya and a Vaiśya respectively. Gobhila Gṛhya sūtra[1] requires a Brahmin to put on linen or hempen clothes, a Kṣatriya cotton clothes and a Vaiśya woollen clothes.

The girdle : The students of all the castes used to wear a girdle round their waist, symbolizing the encirclement of the student by the three Vedas.[2] Some of the Sūtras state that the girdle of a Brahmin is to be made of *Muñja* grass, that of a Kṣatriya should be made of *jyā* (bowstring) and that of a Vaiśya should be made of a woollen thread.[3]

The Staff : The wood of the staves to be kept by the students also differs caste-wise but the Sūtras differ somewhat sharply on this point. The staff of a Brahmin should be made of *Palāśa* or *Bilva* wood, of a Kṣatriya of *Nyagrodha* wood, and of a Vaiśya of *Udumbara* wood.[4] Or any kind of staff may be used by a student of any *Varṇa*.[5]

The Sacred thread : The sacred thread (*Yajñopavīta*) is suspended from the left shoulder and kept under the right armpit.[6] It is made of a string of Kuśa grass or of string (of cotton).[7]

The Sāvitrī : The Sūtras also give rules regarding the mode of teaching of the Sāvitṛī mantra and the form of a dress to be used by the students of different castes at the time of alms. The metres of the *Sāvitrī* verse to be recited at the *Upanayana* were also allotted according to the belief that the *Gāyatrī* metre which bestows the holy lustre, should be chosen by a Brahmin : that the *triṣṭubh* metre, which grants physical strength, should be employed by a Kṣatriya and that the *Jagatī* metre, which gives cattle-wealth, should be used by a Vaiśya.[8]

1. *Go. G. S.* II,10,7.
2. Pandey (R. B.), op. Oit., p. 223.
3. *Śāṅ. G. S.* ii,1,14-7; *ĀŚV. G. S.* 1,19,12; *Pār G. S.* ii.5, 21-23.
4. *Śāṅ. G. S.* ii,1,18-20; *ĀŚV.G.S.* 1,19,13; *Pār.G.S.* ii,5,25-27; *Āp.G.S.V*, ii,16.
5. *Śāṅ. G.S*, ii,1,24; *AŚV. G.S.* i. 20,1, *Pār. G.S.* ii, 5,28; *Āp.G.S.* ii, 10,14; etc.
6. *Khādira. G.S.* 1.1.5.
7. Ibid. 1.1.4.
8. Ramgopal : op. cit., pp. 121-122. (*Vārāha. G.S.* 5.43. *Agniveśya G.S.* 3.8.2.,p. 162) (*Pār. G.S.* 2.3.7-10).
   Śāṅ. G.S. 2.5.4-6.

Alms : As regards the alms, the Sūtras ask a Brahmin student to beg alms of a woman (first) with the words "Madam (*Bhavati*) give alms"; a Kṣatriya, with the words : "Give, Madam, alms", a Vaiśya with the words : "Give alms, madam".[1] Baudhāyana calls it the first occupation for the *brahmacārins* of the three castes.[2] This would indicate a sense of humility in the newly initiated student.[3]

Designations : The Brahmin students were designated as *Brahman*, *Śrotriya*, *Anūchāna*, *Ṛṣikalpa*, *Bhrūṇa Ṛṣi* and *Deva*.[4] Before the initiation ceremony a child born of Brahmin parents is called a *Jāta* (just born)[5] but after conning some portion of the vedas, and keeping the vows, he becomes a *Brahmacārin* and a *Brahman* by the mere act of initiation.[6] A *śrotriya* studies one branch of the Vedas.[7] An *Anūcāna* studies the Vedas alongwith the Aṅgas.[8] The *ṛṣikalpa* studies the *Kalpas*.[9] A *Bhrūṇa*[10] studies the *Sūtra-Pravacana*. The *ṛṣi*[11] studies all the Vedas. And one studying the Vedas and more is a *deva*.[12] The Sūtras also refer to three kinds of *snātaka* i.e. *vidyā-snātaka*, *Vrata-snātaka* and *vidyā-vrata-snātaka*.[13] A *Vidyā-snātaka*[14] performed the *Samāvartana* ceremony denoting the termination of his education, when he had learnt the Veda, but before expiry of his vows. The *Vrata-snātaka*[15] performed the *Samāvartana* cere-

1. *Par. G.S.* 2.5.2-4.
   Bau. Dh. S. 1.2.17-18; *Gau. Dh.S.* 1.2.42; *Vas. Dh. S.* 11.68-70; *Vārāha.* 5.51-53; *Jaiminī, G.S.* 1.12; *Satyāṣāḍha Ś.S.* 26.1., pp. 103-105.
2. *Bau. Dh. S.* 1.2.19.
3. Valvalkar (P.N.H.), op. cit., pp. 105-11.
4. *Bau. G.S.* 1.7.1-8.
5. Ibid. 1.7.1.
6. Ibid. 1.7.2.
7. Ibid. 1.7.3.
   Sat. G.S. 4.8
8. Ibid. 1.7.4.
9. Ibid. 1.7.5.
10. Ibid. 1.7.6.
11. Ibid. 1.7,7.
12. Ibid. 1.7.8.
13. *Pār. G.S.* 2.5.33.35.
14. Ibid. 2.5.33.
15. Ibid. 2.5.34.

mony after having fulfilled all his vows but before completing the study of the Veda. But one who had both finished the study of the Veda, had kept the vows and had then performed the above ceremony was called *Vidyā-Vrata-Snātaka*.[1] The Sūtras have other details with regard to the lives of the students, viz., the duties of the students and their behaviour, etc.

(i) Relationship with the teacher : The most important quality of all Ancient Hindu Education was that it assigned a very high place to the teachers, who were Brahmins.[2] In this system, "the raw material of the child was given over, for proper emotional and intellectual shaping, to the care of the expert, who was particularly equipped for his special task, and whose main duty was to teach and train".[3] Living with the *ācārya*, the child was saved from the influence of the conflict between the teacher and the family of the student as is, for instance, the case in modern schools.[4] Thus the child was placed "under the care of tried person of a high moral character".[5] The Upaniṣads[6] and the Sūtras consider the *ācārya* as "the spiritual father" of the pupil. The *ācārya* was expected to shower on the pupil the affection due to a son.[7] The task of the teacher being of great responsibility, the Sūtras have laid down the duties of a teacher. He has to impart to the student whatever he knows.[8] He should not exploit him for his own purpose[9] and should love him like his own son.[10]

According to the Sūtras, the teacher plays an important role in the moral development of the student. Āpastamba defines an *ācārya* as the person from whom the pupil gathers (*ācinoti*) his dharma[11] and from whom he receives the *Upana-*

1. Ibid. 2.5.35.
2. *Sat. G.S.* 27.1.77.
3. Valvalkar (P.N.H.), op. cit., p. 114.
4. Ibid p. 115.
5. Ibid. p. 115.
6. *Vas. Dh. S.* 28, 38-9, *Gau. Dh. S.* 1,1.10; *Āp. Dh.* i. 2.
7. *Pra. Up.* 5.8; *Āp.* 1,2.
8. *Muṇḍ. Up.* i, 2.23; *Ch.Up.* vii, 16,7.
9. *Āp.* 2,8,25-26.
10. Ibid.
11. *Āp. Dh. S.* i ,1,1,13. Yasmād dharmān ācinoti sa ācāryaḥ.

yana sacrament (*saṁskāra*).[1] Yāska explains the word thus : "*Ācārya* (teacher) is so called because he imparts traditional precepts (*ācāra*), or because he systematically develops the intellectual faculty".[2] Explaining this very term the Vasiṣṭha points out the difference between an *Ācārya* and an *Upādhyāya*.[3] He says : An *Ācārya* is one who having initiated (a child) teaches him the entire Veda".[4]

Teacher and the students : To impart 'truth exactly as he knew it'[5], was the duty of the teacher. In this connection Āpastamba says that the teacher leads the pupil from the darkness of ignorance to the light of knowledge.[6] A student is also asked to obey his teacher, except when ordered to commit a crime causing the loss of *Varṇa*. Otherwise a student should carry out his teacher's orders The student should not contradict the teacher, nor occupy a couch or a seat higher than that of the teacher.[7] Such rules are not meant to create but are meant only to promote humility and modesty in the student.[8] If a teacher is not competent to teach any subject, the student is permitted to seek another for instructions in that subject.[9] So intimate was the relationship between the teacher and the taught that it was incumbent upon the latter to dissuade the former from doing unrighteous acts.[10] The importance of the *guru*, the teacher becomes all the more important in the Upaniṣads. Higher knowledge, that of the Ātman, cannot be obtained without a *guru*.[11] The Āpastamba[12] places the teacher at par with the deity and would like both to be worshipped accordingly.

Types of Teacher : Pāṇini calls the *Upanayana* ceremony as

1. *Gau. Dh. S.* 1.9.
2. Laksmana Swarupa : *Nirukta*, p. 8.
   Yāska, *Nirukta* 1.2.2.2
3. *Vas. Dh. S.* 3.21-22.
4. Ibid. 3.21. 'upanīya kṛtsnaṁ vedamadhyāpayet sa ācāryaḥ'.
5. *Muṇḍ. up.* i, 2,23; *Praśna up.* vi, 1 : *Chā. Up.* vii. 16,7.
6. *Āp. Dh. S.* 10.11; 1.1.2,9; *Bau. Dh. S.* 1,2,3,23.
7. *Āp. Dh. S.* 1,1,2,18-21; *Gav. Dh. S.* II. 27, *Bau. Dh. S.* 1,2,3,23.
8. Valvalkar (P.N.H.). op. cit., p. 116.
9. *Āp.Dh.S.* 1,2,7,26.
10. Ibid. 1,1,4,25-26.
11. *Kaṭha Up.* 2.9
12. *Āp. Dh. S.* 1,2,6,13.

ācāryakaraṇa because by means of this ceremony he (a brahmin) becomes an *ācārya* and the student his *antevāsin*.[1] The practice of naming the student after the teacher shows the close relation between the teacher and the taught. A Sūtra of Pāṇini reads, '*Ācāryopasarjanascāntevāsī*' (VI. 2.36; VI 2.104) the *antevāsī* is known after the teacher, e.g. *Āpiśala*, *Pāṇinīya* etc. The distinguished *Ācāryas*, e.g. *Ācārya* Śākaṭāyana, Ācārya Pāṇini, represent the highest stage of academic distinction.[2] On the other hand one who teaches a part[3] thereof or only the auxiliary sciences,[4] is an *Upādhyāya*. Pāṇini also mentions three classes of teachers, namely, *Pravaktā*, *Śrotriya* and *Adhyāpakv*.[5] According to Dr. Agrawala, "The *Pravaktā* appears to have been an exponent of the traditional sacred texts, or *Proktā* literature, under the general direction of the *Ācārya*".[6]

A *śrotriya* is defined as one capable of reciting the *chhandas* and the Vedas (*śrotriyaṁschhandodhīte*).[7] He specialized in committing to memory the Vedic texts in various forms of recitations (*pāṭha*) such as *Pada-pāṭha* and *Krama-pāṭha* etc. The terms *Krāmaka* and *Pādaka* etc. refer to teachers who master their particular modes of recitation.[8]

The *Adhyāpaka*,[9] also designated as *Upādhyāya*, seems to have been a teacher of secular and scientific treatises.[10]

The Buddhist and Jaina works also show the same kind of educational atmosphere, although they decry the special privileges of the priestly class. The word ācariya is frequently used in the Buddhist works. Caṅkī[11] and Jānussoṇi[12] were among

1. Agrawala (V.S.), op. cit., pp. 282-84. (Pāṇ. 1.3.36).
2. Agrawala (V.S.), op. cit., 282-83 (Pāṇ. 1.3.36).
3. *Vas. Dh. S.* 3.22.
4. Ibid. 3.23
5. Agrawala (V.S.), op. cit., 283. According to this writer the teachers refered to in the sūtra "seem to be mentioned in order of their precedence in the educational system". Pāṇini *ASD* 11.1.65.
6. Ibid.
7. *Pāṇini* V. 2.84., quoted by Agrawala (V.S.), op. cit., p. 283.
8. Ibid.
9. *Paṇini*, II.165.
10. Agrawala (V.S.), op. cit., p. 283.
11. *Majj. N.* II. 45.1.3. pp. 427-29.
12. Ibid. 2.7.1.4

the *ācāryas*, whose hermitages were full of hundreds of students. The Brahmins formed the *ācariya* or the *guru* class to which no other caste seems to have made the least claim.[1] The religious seats of Brahmin *parivrājakas* were called *Ārāmas* and *Vihāras* where discussion on various topics were common.[2] These works also refer to Nakha Pāṣaṇḍa, a Brahmin sect[3] which while moving in different parts of the country, used to instruct people in the doctrine of *Karma* and depict the scenes of Heaven and Hell through the medium of pictures painted on cloth. A Jaina work mentions three types[4] of teachers viz. *Kalāyariya*, (one who teaches the arts), *Sippāyariya* (architecture) and *Dhammāyariya* (religious teacher).

Teacher's fee : The sūtras do not prescribe any fee for the teacher. His income consisted of presents obtained by him partly on the occasions of festivals, religious ceremonies and sacrifices and partly by voluntary gifts given by the students. According to Gautama, on completion of the education, the teacher is to be offered a fee; only on its payment, was the student allowed to go. But in case of distress, the teacher could accept presents from all the four castes.[5]

Normally a student would, at the end of his studies, procure the fee.[6] "In regard to the vexed question of teachers' emoluments, it appears that the ancients had arrived at the truth of the matter when they concluded that society will probably never be able to pay the teachers adequately in terms of money and therefore all that the person adopting the teacher's life should expect was an austere life and ample respect from society and complete freedom in respect of education of his pupils".[7] A Jātaka[8] tale states that a certain king, used to take lessons from

1. Ācariya brāhmaṇo mayham Kiccā Kiccesu Vyāvato I guru ca āmantanīyo ca dātuṁ arhāmi bhojanam II Fausboll, Jātaka, IV, No. 496, p. 371.
2. Pandey (V. C.) : *Bhārtavarṣa kā Sāmājika Itihāsa*, p. 350.
3. *Saṁ. Nikāya*, 3.151.
4. *Rayapaseṇiya*, 3.135. Quoted by Pandeya in op. cit., p. 366.
5. *Gau. Dh. S.* 2.55; 7.4.
6. *Āp. Dh. S.* 1.3.7.19.
7. Veda Mitra : *Education in Ancient India*, vii.
8. Fausboll, *Jātaka*, Vol. III, 309, p. 27.

his teacher while sitting on a higher seat, was made to understand the implied impropriety of his act. The teacher concerned was also criticised for acquiesing in this act.

At the time of the admission, "Usually the students paid the entire tution fee—the teacher's fee, *ācaribhāgam*, in advance, which was a thousand pieces of money (a stock phrase).[1] In a Jātaka story two boys go to Takṣaśilā for education and pay two thousand pieces to their teacher.[2] A student not paying the fee on admission, was made to work all day and taught after sunset.[3] Those who had paid the thousand pieces, were taught during day-time as the teacher's own sons, along with the extremely bright ones.[4] These two classes of students were called *dhammantevāsika* and *ācariyabhāgadāyaka*.[5] In the Tillamuṭṭhi Jātaka a teacher asks a student, "Have you brought your teacher's fee (*ācariyabhāga*) or do you wish to become a *dhammantevāsī*.[6] There are instances where the poor Brahmin students paid the fee to the teacher by begging after they had completed their studies.[7] Sometimes the fee was paid by the rich on behalf of the needy students.[8] The Jātakas also tell us about teachers who took no fee from the students as the city-rich used to fulfil their needs.[9] Therefore the poverty of a student willing to study, did not always prove an insurmountable obstacle.

THE HOUSEHOLDER :

(*i*) *Place for residence* : The Dharma Sūtras prescribe a special place for a Brahmin's residence. *Āpastamba* says, "It is lawful for a Brahmin to dwell in a village where there are

1. Mehta (R.L.) : op. cit., p. 300. See also Fick, op. cit., p. 204-5.
2. Fausboll, *Jātaka*, Vol. III, 445, p. 37.43.
3. Ibid. *Tilamuṭṭhi Jātaka*, II No. 252, p. 278-82.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Fick, op. cit., pp. 204-5.
7. Ibid (J. IV. No. 478, p. 224).
8. Ibid (J. I No. 41, p. 239).
9. Fausboll, *Tilamuṭṭhi Jātaka*, (J. III, No. 438, p. 537).

fuel and water in plenty and where he may perform his purificatory rites".[1] Regarding the selection of a proper site for residence, different types and colours of soil are prescribe p A Brahmin should select a soil that is white, sandy and sweet, a Kṣatriya red and a Vaiśya yellow.[2] The *Baudhāyana* says that a Brahmin who is the husband of a *Vṛṣalī*, becomes a Śūdra if he lives in the village of the Śūdras for twelve years.[3]

The Brahmin villages are frequently referred to in the *Jātakas*[4]. *Ekasāla, Icchānaṅgala, Manasākaṭa, Venāgapura, Dāṇḍakappaka* and *Veludvāsa* are referred as villages exclusively inhabited by the Brahmins.[5] They refer to a Brahmin village named *Sālindiya.*[6]

The Jaina texts also refer to Brahmin villages.[7] "The majority of the villages", observes Dr. Jain, "probably contained a heterogenous population, but there were others, inhabited exclusively or mainly by members of a single caste or followers of a single occupation. For example, the city of Vaiśālī had three important suburbs, namely, *Bambhaṇagāma Khattiyakuṇḍaggāma* and (Vaiśya) *Vaṇiyagāma* inhabited by Brahmins, Kṣatriyas and merchants in that order.[8]"

Pāṇini mentions caste with reference to *gotra, janapada* and Saṁghas. For instance, the *kuru gotra* occurs both amongst the Brahmins and Kṣatriyas. If the father is a Brahmin, he and his young son (*yuvan*) were called *Kauravīya* but if a Kṣatriya is the father, then they would be *Kauravya* and *Kauravyāṇī*[9].

Pāṇini makes a special mention of the *Vāhīkasaṁghas* (P.V.3.114), some dominated by Brahmins as ruling caste (*Gopā-*

1. *Āp. Dh. S.* 1.5.15.21; *Bau. Dh. S.* 2.3.51.
2. *Āśv. G. S.* 2.7.6-8. *Gobh. G.S.* IV. 7.5-7. It says that the ground for a Vaiśya-house be black.
3. *Bau. Dh. S.* 2.3.52.
4. Dutt (N.K.), *Development of Buddhism in Uttar Pradesh*, p. 127.
5. Fausboll, *Pakiṇṇaka-Nipāta-Jātaka*, IV. No. 484.
6. Ibid.
7. Jain (J.C.), op. cit., p. 82.
8. Ibid.
9. Agrawala (V.S.), op. cit., p. 77.

layas).[1] A variant of *Bālhīka* is *Vālhīka* in the Mahābhārata and another is *Vāhīka*.[2] In the Sūtras of Pāṇini, the term *Vāhīka* is used for the whole of the Panjab up to the confines of *Uśīnara*.[3] Kātyāyana derives the word *Vāhīka* from the word *bahi* with the addition of the sufix *ikak* and takes it to mean the country outside the pale of the orthodox Brahmanical society.[4] This indicates that the *Vāhīkas* were the inhabitants of the Panjab.

(*ii*) *Assembly* : The Brahmin assemblies are frequently mentioned in the Upaniṣads, in the Sūtras and in the Buddhist works. They were known as *Pariṣads*.[5] "The early *Pariṣad* was a tribal military assembly, partly matriarchal and partly patriarchal. It had hardly anything to do with the king and Brahmins, who came to dominate it in later times."[6] In the period of the Upaniṣads and the Gṛhya Sūtras and later, it became "partly an academy and partly a royal council dominated by priests, who functioned as teachers and advisers."[7] The reason can be seen, in "the growth of *Varṇas* and state-power towards the end of the later Vedic period."[8] Both the Upaniṣads and the Gṛhya Sūtras suggest the academic character of the Pariṣad.[9] In these *pariṣads* were held discourses on different topics. The Kaṭhopaniṣad refers to one such Pariṣad and declares that he who practising self-control, recites the supreme secret in an assembly of the Brahmins gains thereby infinite rewards.[10] The Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad also refers to an assembly in which the king Janaka announced a prize of a thousand cows with ten *pādas* of gold fastened on the horns of each cow. This could be won by a person proving his worth

1. Agrawala (V.S.), op. cit. p. 77.
2. Buddha Prakash : *Political and Social Movement in Ancient Punjab*, p. 135.
3. Ibid, p. 136.
4. Ibid, Pāṇini, IV. 185.
5. Sharma (R.S.) *Aspects*, op. cit., p. 99.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid, p. 100.
8. Ibid. p. 100.
9. Ibid.
10. *Kaṭha. Up.* 1.3.17.

in the assembly of the learned. Yājñavalkya proved himself superior to others and got these cows.[1] The Gṛhya Sūtras say that the *Pariṣad* is a seminary in which the pupil sits near the teacher.[2] The evidence that it functioned as a royal council is provided by Pāraskara, wherein the *Pariṣad* is represented as conducting a debate under the chairmanship of its Iśāna (president). We further learn that during the debate the members vied not only in showing their superiority and brilliance but also tried to disarm the wrath of the President and win his favour.[3] The commentary of Harihara on the Pāraskara avers that this body was attended mainly by the Brahmins, but perhaps this reflects the composition of the *Pariṣad* in the age of the commentator rather than in that of the text.[4]

The expression, *pariṣadbala* used by Pāṇini in connection with the king indicates that it was a royal council and its members exercised enormous influence upon the king.[5] It used to perform social, academic and political functions in the days of Pāṇini.[6] Only the duly qualified persons could be the members of this body.[7] They were called *pāriṣads* and *pāriṣadyas*.[8]

The *Baudhāyana* declares "that those without a mantra (sacred counsel) and *vrata* (vow), even if accompanied by a thousand of companions cannot shine in the *Pariṣad*".[9] From this one can guess the big size of the assembly.[10]

It is interesting to note that "In the early brahmanical lawbooks the *Pariṣad* took on the character of a body of legal experts".[11] Its members were "engaged in teaching and intellectual discussions, but they were now inclined more towards

1. *Bṛh. Up.* 3.1.1.
2. *Khādira. G. S.* 3.1.25, *Go.G.S.* 3.2.50; Sharma (R.S.). *Aspects*, op. cit., p. 101.
3. *Pāraskara G.S.* 3.13.4-5; Sharma (R.S.), *Aspects*, op. cit. p. 101.
4. Ibid. 3.13.4-5; Sharma (R.S.), *Aspects*, op. cit., p. 101.
5. Sharma (R.S.), *Aspects*, op. cit., p. 101.
6. Agrawala (V.S.), op. cit., p. 399.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. *Bau. Dh. S.* 1.1.16 quoted by Sharma (R.S.) *Aspects*, op. cit., p. 98.
10. Ibid.,
11. *Bau. Dh. S.* 1.1.16. quoted by Sharma (R.S.), *Aspects*, op. cit., p. 101.

law than teaching".[1] A number of passages show that, "it was essentially a council of the priests".[2] The Dharma Sūtras describe its composition in similar terms.[3] Baudhāyana clearly states that ten members of the Pariṣad should be *vipras* (i.e. Brahmins).[4]

According to Prof. Sharma "The process by which the *Pariṣad* was reduced to the position of a small body dominated by the Brahmins can be linked up with the break up of the old tribal society into *varṇas* and the emergence of the Brahmins as one of the dominant class, "The supremacy which they enjoyed from the end of the Vedic period is naturally reflected in the composition of the *Pariṣad* outlined in the Brahmanical lawbooks".[5]

The *Majjhima Nikāya* refers to similar assemblies.[6] A Brahmin, Ghoṭamukha by name, had an assembly built and maintained from his regular supply of alms at Pāṭalīputta.[7]

(*iii*) *Marriage* : In regard to marriage, the Gṛhya-sūtras[8] and the Dharmasūtras[9] lay down that a man should marry a maiden belonging to his own caste. This shows that in the sūtra period, the freedom of marriage is no more as by this time the caste-system must have become more complicated and rigid.

The sūtras mention eight[10] forms of marriages. Out of these, the first four i.e. *Brāhma*, *Prājāpatya*, *Daiva* and *Ārṣa*, were considered to be superior and sanctioned by the śāstras.[11] But according to some, says Gautama[12], the first six forms are lawful

1. *Bau. Dh. S.* 1.1.16.
2. Ibid; Hopkins (E.W.), loc. cit., p. 148.
3. *Baudh.* 1.1.8.9, *Gautama.* 28.50-51; *Vas.* 3.20.
4. Ibid.
5. Sharma (R.S.) : *Aspects*, op. cit., p. 102.
6. *Majj. N.* 2.44.1.2 pp. 414-15.
7. *Majj. N.* 44.2.10. p. 426,
8. *Mānava. Ś.* 1.7.8.
9. *Āp. Dh. S.* 2.6.13.1.3.
   Gaut. Dh. S. 4.1. *Vas. Dh. S.* mentions only six types of marriages (1.25).
10. *Āśv. G. S.* 1.6; *Bau. Dh. S.* 1.11, *Gau. Dh. S.* 4.6-13.
11. *Gau. Dh. S.* 4.6-13. Āśv. 1.6.
12. Ibid.

(for persons of the three higher Varṇas). The Nārāyaṇa and Devasvāmin on Āśvalāyana have allowed only the first four forms of marriages for the Brahmins.[1] A Brahmin could have three wives, one from his caste, one from Kṣatriya caste and one from the Vaiśya caste.[2] Similarly, a Kṣatriya and a Vaiśya could have two and one respectively.[3] A Śūdra could marry only a Śūdra woman.[4] These are the marriages of *anuloma* type. According to the Pāraskara, some say that the men of three higher *Varṇas* could have a Śūdra wife in addition to other wives but this kind of marriage should be celebrated without the recitation of the mantras.[5] This quotation however, implies the dislike of Pāraskara himself towards such marriages. The Brahmin's marriage with a Śūdrā though allowed by some sūtra writers, is contested by others. According to Gautama[6] Brahmin, having connubial relationship with a Śūdra woman should not be invited at a *Śrāddha.* Vasiṣṭha totally prohibits this type of connubium.[7] It also lays down that anyone acting in such a manner, degrades his family and does not attain heaven after death.[8] According to Prof. Sharma,'the view that the Śūdra wife should be avoided'; came into conflict with an earlier rule of Vasiṣṭha, whereby a Brahmin can take three wives, a Kṣatriya two and a Vaiśya and a Śūdra, one each, in the order of their *Varṇas.*[9] We do not, however, see any conflict herein. The conflict lies between the views of the author (i.e. Vasiṣṭha) and other writers, the latter allowing Brahmin's connubial relations with women of other *Varṇas.*

So it is thus clear that a Brahmin, along with men of the other two higher *Varṇas,* could resort to polygamy, if he so desired. The law codes forbid the marriage between the men and women born of the same mother (*sapiṇḍa*), of the same *gotra* and of

1. Nārāyaṇa and Devasvāmin's commentories on *Āśv. G. S.* 1.6.
2. *Vas. Dh. S.* 1.24; *Pār. G. S.* 1.4.8-11; *Bau. Dh. S.* 1.8.2.
3. *Vas. Dh. S.* 1.24; *Pār. G. S.* 1.4.8-11; *Bau. Dh. S.* 1.8.2.
4. Ibid.
5. *Pār. G. S.* 1.4.8.11.
6. *Gau. Dh. S.* 4.15.18.
7. *Vas. Dh. S.* 1.24-27.
8. Ibid.
9. Sharma (R. S.), Śūdras, op. cit.. p. 111.

the same *pravara*. According to Gobhila[1] and Āpstamba[2] one should not marry a *sapiṇḍa* girl. Gautama[3] says that the *sapiṇḍa* relation exists up to the seventh generation on the father's side and up to the fifth on the mother's side. But according to Āpastamba it persists up to the sixth generation on both the sides.[4] According to Āpastamba[5] marriages between such agnates degrade both the sides. Both Gautama and Baudhāyana[6] condemn such alliances. Elsewhere Gobhila[7] says that (one should marry a girl) not belonging to the same *gotra*. In the Upaniṣads we hear of the *gotras*, such as Gautama, Jāmadagni Kāśyapa, Vasiṣṭha, Bhāradvāja, Āśvalāyana, Gārgya, Bhārgava, and Kātyāyana etc.,[8] but such terms denote the schools founded by these sages and any one passing out of these schools bore the name of that school. In the age of the Sūtras these terms had lost that sense and were used in connection with marriages.[9] And so Āpastamba[10]also enjoins a father not to give his daughter to a *sagotra* in marriage. The *Vaikhānasa*[11] says "Born of Brahmā's mouth, the Brahmin men and Brahmin women became (*Brahmaṛṣis*) *gotra* organs and one who was born of a Brahmin woman belonging to a different gotra,married in accordance with the religious rites and with the recitation of the mantras. Thus the Brahmins are responsible for this *gotra* classification. The term *gotra* may be defined as an exogamous patrilineal kinship whose members trace their descent back to common ancestor.[12] *Baudhāyana* has defined *gotra* as *Saptānām ṛṣiṇām agastyāṣṭamaṁ yad apatyaṁ tad gotram*, i.e.

1. *G . G. S.* 3.4.4.
2. *Āp. Dh. S.* 2.5.11.16.
3. *Gau. Dh. S.* 4.2. See also *Vas. Dh. S.* 8.2.
4. *Āp. Dh. S.* 2.5.11.16.
5. Ibid. 1.7.21.8.
6. *Bau. Dh. S.* 1.1.19-26.
7. *Go. G. S.* 3.4.3.
8. *Br. Up.* 2.2.4., *Ch. Up.* 5.14.1.
9. Pandey (V. C.), op. cit., p. 135.
10. *Āp. Dh. S.* 2.5.11-15.
11. *Vaikh. Dh. S.* 3.11.3.
12. Brough, *Early Brahmanical System of Gotra and Pravara, Introduction*, p. 2.

a *gotra* is the whole group of persons descended from one of the seven *ṛṣis* or Agastya.[1] The *ṛṣis* are Jamadagni, Gautama, Bhāradvāja, Atri, Viśvāmitra, Kaśyapa, Vasiṣṭha with addition of Agastya.[2] Now it is clear that the prohibition of marriage within the *gotra* overlaps the *Sapiṇḍa* restriction, since many of the *sapiṇḍa* on father's side are also *sagotras*.[3] Gautama,[4] Vasiṣṭha[5] and Mānava[6] forbid marriages between persons having same *pravara*. "A *pravara* is a stereotyped list of names of ancient *ṛṣis* or seers, who are believed to be the remote founders of the families"[7]. It seems that *pravara* had something to do with the Brahmins but later on this (*pravara*) was extended to other two *varṇas*. According to Āpastamba[8] the sacrificer who does not remember his *pravara* should speak out the *pravara* of his teacher. Baudhāyana[9] and Āśvalāyana[10] enjoin that the Kṣatriyas and the Vaiśyas should speak out the *pravara* of their *purohita* at the time of the sacrifice. Thus a Brahmin was expected to take into consideration the *piṇḍa*, *gotra* and *pravara* of the bride and then marry her 'during the northern course of the sun, in the time of increasing moon, on an auspicious day.[11]

The Dharma Sūtras call the children born from the wives of the same caste as *savarṇas*.[12] According to Baudhāyana[13] and Gautama[14] the children begotten on the women of other three castes were known as Brahmins or *savarṇa*, *Ambaṣṭha* and

1. Brough, op. cit., p .2.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. *Gau. Dh. S.* 4.2.
5. *Vas. Dh. S.* 8.1.
6. *Mān. S. S*, 1.7.8.
7. Brough, op. cit., Introduction, p. 2.
8. *Āp. Ś. S.* 24.10.17.
9. Bau. Ś. S. Uttara-Ṣaṭka; Bau. Ś. S. Pravara Praśna 54.
10. *AŚV. Ś. S. Uttara-Ṣaṭka*, 6.15.4-5.
11. *Pār. G. S.* 1.4.5-7.
12. *Bau. Dh. S.* 1.86.
13. Ibid. 1.9.2.
14. *Gau.Dh. S.* 1.4.14.15 (16-17). It calls the son of Brahmin and a Kṣatriya woman as *Savarṇa*. Also see *Vai. Dh. S.* 3.12.4,10; 3.13.1.

Niṣāda. Baudhāyana[1] further states that the child born from the union of a Brahmin and a Śūdrā was also called by the term *Pārāśava* by some authors. Vaikhānasa[2] gives the avocations of these children. The performing of the religious acts according to the Atharvaveda, horse-riding, elephant-riding, chariot-riding, carrying of the palanquins and commanding the forces of the king, are described as the avocations of a *pārāśava*.[3] A child of an adulterous union between a Brahmin male and Kṣatriya woman was called *Abhiṣikta*[4] and his duty was to study, to become a king and learn the eight branches of medicine (*Āyurveda*) and witch-craft. He should be endowed with the virtue of mercy. Astronomy was to be his additional avocation.[5] Dancing, making of flags, and practising the branch of surgery dealing with the extraction of splinters and arrows from the body, are the lawful occupations of an *Ambaṣṭha*.[6] Pot making and shaving of men's hair, are the means of livelihood of a *Kumbhakāra*[7], a child born of the adulterous intercourse between a Brahmin and a Vaiśya woman. The worship of Bhadrakālī and the practice of *aṅgavidyā*, beating of drums and shampooing, are the occupations of *Pārāśava*.[8] But from the adulterous intercourse between them i.e. a Brahmin and a Śūdra, is born a *Niṣāda*, the slayer of wild beasts.[9]

Buddhist sources also favour edogamous connections. The Dīgha Nikāya does not appreciate a marriage between a Kṣatriya and a Brāhmaṇa.[10] Once Ambaṭṭha asked the Buddha "will the child born of such union (i.e. union between Kṣatriya and a Brāhmaṇa) get the consecration ceremony of the Kṣatriya". The Buddha replied, "Certainly not", and added, "Because he is not of pure descent on the mother's

1. *Bau.Dh.S.* 1.9.3; *Vaikh.Dh.S.* 3.13.1; *Gaut.Dh.S.* 1.4.14-15.
2. *Vaikh. Dh.S.* 3.12.4-11; 3.13.1-2.
3. Ibid. 3.12.4
4. Ibid. 3.12.5.
5. Ibid. 3.12.6-9.
6. Ibid. 3.12.10.
7. Ibid. 3.12.11.
8. Ibid. 3.13.1.
9. Ibid. 3.13.2.
10. *Dīgha.N.* 1.3.6-22, p.84-86 (3.1.24).

side"[1]. The *Aṅguttara Nikāya*[2] says that the Brahmins in ancient times approached only a Brahmin, but now the Brahmins have degraded themselves by approaching the non-Brahmin women as well. The words *Sādisī Bhāryā* and *Samānajātikulā* frequently occur in the Jātakas,[3] showing that matrimonial relations were generally established between men and women of the same caste. In the Anusociya Jātaka[4] a Brahmin asks other Brahmins to find out a Brahmin virgin for his son. The Jātakas refer to numerous cases where a man of higher caste took the woman of a lower varṇa as his wife. In Kula-Jātaka a Brahmin is said to have married a queen. But that is an exception.[5]

In the Sūtras, man belonging to the higher *varṇas* can marry a girl of the lower *Varṇa*, but the marriage between a man of the lower *Varṇa* and the woman of the higher *Varṇa* i.e. *pratiloma* marriage, is not approved of.[6] Gautama severely condemns *pratiloma* marriages and attributes the loss of caste to them.[7] That marriage between a Brahmin woman and the male of the other castes was solomnised, though not on a large scale, is shown by a passage of Gautama[8], whereby the sons begotten on a Brahmin woman by persons of the four *Varṇas* are called Brahmin, *Sūta*, *Māgadha*, and *Cāṇḍāla* in that order. A child born of the union of a Brahmin male and a woman of another caste attains Brahminhood in the seventh or fifth generation.[9] Similarly a child born of the Śūdra male and a Brahmin woman becomes a Śūdra in the fifth or seventh generation.[10]

1. Dīgha. N. I.3.6.22.
2. *Aṅgutt. N.* 5.20.1.1. p.466.
3. Fausboll, J.I.31. p. 199; I.136, p. 375; N.K. Dutt, op. cit., p. 276-77, iv. 455, p. 99.
4. Fausboll, *Anusociya-Jātaka.* III. 328, pp. 92-97.
5. Fausboll, *Kula-Jātaka*, Vol. III, 411, p. 392.
6. *Gaut. Dh.S.* 4.20.
7. Ibid. 4.18.
8. Ibid.
   See also *Bau.Dh.S.* 1.9.6.8. But here the author calls the son begotten on a Brahmin woman by a Vaiśya as a *Vaidehaka.*
9. *Gaut. Dh.S.* 4.22.
10. *Vaikh. Dh.S.* 3.12.3.

The early law-books trace the origin of about a dozen mixed (*Varṇasaṁkara*) castes mostly on the basis of such marriages.[1] The Vaikhānasa gives the practising of the sacred laws and the cooking of king's food as the occupations of a Sūta (a child born from the union of a Kṣatriya male and a Brahmin woman) and says that a *sūta* is best among children born of the pratiloma type of marriages.[2] According to same sources, a *sūta* is to be initiated with the *mantras* and is not allowed the religious rites of the twice-born (*dvija*).[3] It gives hunting as the profession of a *Niṣāda* (a son born from a adulterous intercourse between a Brāhmaṇī and a Śūdra.[4] Singing the praises of others, singing and carrying of messages were the avocations of a *Māgadha*[5] (a child born of Kṣatriya and a Brāhmaṇī). An illegitimate son born of a Vaiśya and a Brāhmaṇī was called *Cakri* and his profession was to sell oil or salt.[6] The collection of filth from village streets in the forenoon was the work of caṇḍāla.[7] He had to wear ornaments made of red and black iron, and a leather thong slung from his neck and a drum by his side.[8] He was deprived of all religious rites.[9] A Cāṇḍāla had to live with his own people outside the city. Pāṇini places caṇḍāla in the category of a *nirvāsita* Śūdra. There were Śūdras who were allowed to live inside the city is suggested by the term *anirvāsita* Śūdra. The commentator explains these two terms *nirvāsita* and *anirvāsita*. *Antarvāsita* is explained as one whose touched object (pot) can be purified by washing whereas the pot touched by *nirvāsita* Śūdra cannot be sanctified by the similar act of purification.[10] Gautama enjoins a king to kill a cāṇḍāla who lives in the village otherwise he would incur the sin of

1. *Vaikh. Dh. S.* 3.13.8-9.
2. Ibid. 3.13.8-9.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid. 3.13.2.
5. Ibid. 3.13.11.
6. Ibid. 3.13.12.
7. Ibid. 3.14.7.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
10. Pāṇini, 2.4.10.

killing a Brahmin.[1] Thus there is no doubt to the existence of the inter-caste marriages in the period of the Sūtras. The Vaikhānasa further states avocations of children born to a *Brāhmaṇī* by persons called *Antarāla*, *Vrātya* or *Cūcuka*, *Ambaṣṭha*, *Mudgu*, *āyogava*, *Pulkasa and cāṇḍāla*.[2] The avocation of these men are suggested by their names themselves *viz. Nāvika*, *veṇuka*, *charmakāra*, *Rajaka*, *Śvapaca* etc.[3].

In the Buddhist literature references to the marriages between a man belonging to a lower *Varṇa* and a woman of a higher *Varṇa* are not frequent.[4] Though the Jainas state that a king named Jiyasattu and a Kṣatriya named Mayasukumāl married Brahmin girls yet these references can be taken as exceptions.[5]

(*iv*) *Inheritance of Property* : The law of inheritance also gives a special privilege to a Brahmin in the matter of the division of the parental property during the father's life time with his consent and after his demise.[6] Sons born of a legal wife were entitled to have their shares, provided they did not sin against either of their parents.[7] According to Gautama[8] "the son of a Brahmin from a Kṣatriya even though the eldest and endowed with good qualities, shares equally with younger brother born of a Brahmin wife. Such an eldest son shall get no additional share. In the case of the sons begotten by a Brahmin from Kṣatriya and Vaiśya wives, the division of the estate among them was to be according to the rule governing the division of the property between the son borne by a Kṣatriyā and a son borne by a Brāhmaṇī. Thus it is evident that the additional share for the eldest son prescribed by Gautama went only to a child born of Brahmin parents. The son borne by a Śūdrā also, if obedient like a pupil, receives a provision for maintenance out of the estate of the Brahmin

1. *Vaikh.Dh.S.* 3.14.8.9.
2. Ibid. 3.14.10; 3.15.1-11.
3. Ibid.
4. Pandey (V.C.), op. cit., p. 140.
5. Ibid.
6. *Gau.Dh.S.* 28.1-2, *Bau.Dh.S.*II.2.3.8., *Āp.Dh.S.* 2.6.14.1.
7. *Āp.Dh.S.* 2.2.3.10.
8. *Gau.Dh.S.* 28.36-40.

father, provided he has no male issue from another wife from any higher *Varṇas*.[1] Gautama[2] further adds that the sons begotten by the men of lower *Varṇas* on women of higher *Varṇas* should be treated like sons begotten by a Brahmin on a Śudrā wife. Baudhāyana has his own formula in the matter. He says, "when there are sons borne by wives of different *Varṇas*, the whole estate should be divided into ten parts The sons borne by wives from Brahmin, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya and Śūdra *Varṇas* should take four parts, three parts, two parts, and one part respectively.[3] But Āpastamba is against such discrimination and enjoins that the property should be equally divided among all the virtuous sons.[4] If a man dies without a son, then the nearest *sapiṇḍa* (male) inherits the property, on the failure of *sapiṇḍa*, the *ācārya* inherits and on the failure of the *ācārya*, the pupil of the deceased inherits the property to use it for religious rites to be performed for the deceased or he may enjoy it himself, or the daughter of the deceased may inherit the property.[5] In the absence of all these, the property of a Brahmin is to be divided among the *śrotriyas*.[6]

FOOD AND ENTERTAINMENT :

(*a*) *Food :* The Sūtras shed enough light on the food consumed by the people. Barley and rice seem to be the most important ingredients.[7] This is seen in the fact that the daily offering to the gods consisted of barley reaped from the harvest for use till the rice harvest and of rice from the rice harvest.[8] Wheat had not yet become very popular as it is not mentioned in the Sūtras.[9] Pāṇini also refers to the use of barley and rice.[10]

1. *Gau. Dh. S.* 28.5.
2. Ibid. 28.46.
3. *Eau. Dh.S.* 2.2.3.10.
4. *Āp. Dh.S.* 2.6.14.6-14.
5. Ibid. 2.6.14.2-4.
6. *Gau. Dh.S.* 28.42; *Vas. Dh.S.* 17,84-87.
7. Om Prakash, op. cit., p.34.
8. Ibid; *Bau. Dh.S.* 11.6.21.
9. Ibid. 35.
10. Pāṇini IV. 2.136; V. 1.90.

Boiled rice was taken with curds, honey, meat and milk. It was also cooked with pulses.[1] Parched rice, *Apūpa*, *Pṛthuka*, *Kṛṣara* and *Puroḍāśa* were very popular.[2] Probably cakes made of powdered rice were called *Piṣṭakas*[3].

Milk and its products were in common use. Pāyasa was a popular and favourite preparation of curds.[4]

Meat was also used as an article of food. The meat of an ox or a goat was served to a guest.[5] The flesh of various birds is prescribed even for a child at the time of its first feeding.[6] Meat was freely served at the *Śrāddha* and other sacrifices.[7]

The Sūtrakāras do not prohibit meat-eating for Brahmins. Meat was usually cooked on the occasion of a *Śrāddha* and *Aṣṭakas*[8]. According to Vasiṣṭha if an ascetic invited to a *Śrāddha* feast or a feast relating to gods, refuses to take meat, he has to rot in hell for as many years as there are hair on the body of the sacrificial animal.[9] Further the Sūtras declare no *Madhu-parka* could be performed without meat.[10] Meat was prohibited to a Brahmin student during certain vows, such as *śakvarī*.[11] The Sūtras provide a long list of the animals whose meat is prohibited for all.[12] According to J. C. Jain wine and meat were considered amongst foods of luxury.[13] Meat-eating was quite common in the days of the Jātakas and the Brahmins also used to eat meat without any fear of losing caste. In one

1. Om Prakash, op. cit. 35; *Āśv. Ś.S.* 11.3; *Bau. G.S.* 11.3.5. Pāṇini IV. 4.67.
2. Ibid. p. 36.
3. Ibid., Pāṇini IV. 3.147.
4. Ibid. 38. *Kh. G. S.* III. 1.38.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid., *Pār. G. S.* 1.19.7-13.
7. Ibid.
8. *Bau. G. S.* II.11.65.
9. *Vas. Dh. S.* 11,34.
10. Śāṅ. G. S. 15.2. See Om Prakash, op. cit., p. 38-39. *Āśv. G. S.* 1.24.26. *Kāṭh. G. S.* 24.20. *Pār G. S.* 1.3.29.
11. *Śāṅ. G. S.* II,12,8; *Āśv. G. S.* I,23,21; *Kāt. Ś. S.* IV.5,27.
12. *Gau. Dh. S.* XVII, 25-34; *Bau. Dh. S.* 1,5,12,1-8; *Āp. Dh. S.* I.5 17-29-39; *Vas. Dh. S.* 14,39-48.
13. Jain. (J. C.), op. cit., p. 124.

of the Jātakas we are told that a certain Brahmin wanted to kill a sheep to perform a *Śrāddha*.[1] Elsewhere a jackal asks a Brahmin to live in a forest taking two spits of roasted flesh, two *gohās* and one pot of curd which he would give him.[2] According to Dr. Om Prakash, "it seems that both the Brahmins and Kṣatriyas had no objection to taking of meat.[3] Some ascetics lived on snippets of hides.[4] The meat is frequently mentioned among the etables in the Buddhist works.[5] Meat cooked with rice seems to have been a favourite dish of the Brahmins.

The Jaina monks did not accept any food which involved the killing of an animal. Jinadatta is said to have avoided meat preparations even when prescribed by a physician.[6]

(*b*) *Entertainment* : Life without entertainment becomes dull and monotonous. Therefore, in every period of history man has found means of entertainment. Entertainments like dicing, music, dance, dramatic performances, chariot-races, fairs and listening to tales and historical narratives were some of the popular pastimes of the people of the Sūtra period[7]

Dicing seems to have been very popular pastime from a fairly early period. We have a full hymn about a gambler in the Ṛgveda.[8] The Āpastamba refers to the dicing-game.[9]

Music, dance and festival-spirit were connected with. the Mahāvrata festival from an early period. Both the vocal and instrumental music were no doubt very popular in the age of the Sūtras.[10] The Kaṭha Gṛhya Sūtra (henceforth Kaṭha) and the Śāṅkhāyana prescribe the performance of a dance at the pre-

1. Faüsboll, *Matakabhaṭṭa-Jātaka* I. No. 18, p.166.
2. Faüsboll, *Śaśa J.* III, 316, p. 51-56.
3. Om Prakash, op. cit., p. 64.
4. Ibid.
5. J. VI. 544, p. 238 quoted by Om Prakash, op. cit., p. 65.
6. Ibid., p. 67.
7. Rama Gopal, op. cit., p. 168.
8. *R. V.* X.34.
9. *Āp. Ś. S.* XVIII, 19.1, *Mān. Ś.S.* 1.5.5.7, *Bau. Ś.S.* XXII. 19, *Kāt. Ś. S.* 15.7.18. See also Ram Gopal, op. cit., p. 168.
10. Ramgopal, op. cit. p. 169-171.

wedding ceremony held in the bride's place[1]. It is quite certain that some of the Brahmins earned their livelihood by singing and dancing, for Gautama lays down the rule that those living by playing on musical instruments, singing and dancing should not be invited at the *Śrāddha* feast[2]. Baudhāyana refers to Brahmins who lived by performing on the stage and by imparting instructions in dramaturgy. This shows that such Brahmins must have adopted these jobs in a professional capacity[3].

The Sūtras mention that the chariot-race was a common recreation of the people[4]. The Śrauta Sūtras[5] describe chariot races held during the performance of the Vājapeya sacrifice.

During the sacrifices, sometimes the people were entertained by historical narratives[6]. Besides, betting and gambling are also mentioned in the Buddhist works. A Brahmin is said to have won two thousand coins in betting[7]. The *Aṇḍabhūta* Jātaka states that a Brahmin *purohita* used to play dice with the king and won every time[8].

Wine drinking can also be described as the means of entertainment. The numerous injunctions in this connection show negatively its popularity among the people[9] The Sūtras mention many varieties of drink viz., *Surā*, *Kīlāla*, *Māsara*, *Maireya*, *Kāpiśāyanī*[10]. The use of soma survived only in the Śrauta rituals[11].

The Dharma Sūtras condemn *Surā* drinking in unequivocal terms and prohibit it[12]. It was counted among great

1. Ramgopal, op. cit., pp. 169.71. (*Kāṭha. G. S.* 11.1; *Śāṅ. G.S.* 1.11.5).
2. *Gaut. Dh. S.* XV. 7.
3. *Bau. Dh. S.* 2.1.2.5.
4. Ramgopal. op. cit. p. 171.
5. Ibid; *Kāt. Ś. S.* XVI. 3.21; *Āp. Ś. S.* XVIII. 3.6; *Bau. G. S.* X. 1.1.
6. Ibid. p. 172. During the performance of *Aśvamedha* and *Rājasūya* some stories were narrated.
7. *Vinaya Piṭakam.* p. 172.
8. *Aṇḍabhūta Jātaka.* 1.62. pp. 289-94.
9. Om Prakash, op. cit., p. 43-44.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
12. *Gau. Dh. S.* II,26; 15,15; *Bau. Dh. S.* 2.1.1-17-21. (*Gau. Dh. S.* 2.26), *Āp. D. S.* 1.5.17.21.

sins[1]. They prescribe very severe punishment, branding with red hot iron (sign of the pot) on the forehead for a Brahmin who drinks the *surā*. He is to be banished[2].

Even the Jātakas condemn the partaking of strong drinks for a Brahmin. In one tale a Brahmin boy, who did not drink at all, was made to drink wine by his friend passing it as milk. The Brahmin boy relished its taste. But when he came back, his parents asked him to promise that he would never take it again. But he refused to make such a promise, and he was turned out of the house[3].

The Buddhist and the Jaina works show that the liquor was manufactured and consumed on a large scale[4]. Taverns and drinking shops are frequently mentioned[5]. But the Buddha and Mahāvīra did not allow their followers, especially monks, to indulge in wine[6]. The Jaina canon does not even permit monks to reside at a place where jars of wine are stored[7].

(*vi*) *Journey's End* : The funeral rites (*antyeṣṭi*) mark the last sacrament in a person's life. These rites are described in the Gṛhya-sūtras[8]. After a few rites, the dead is taken to the cremation ground where certain ceremonies are performed before the pyre is lit[9]. According to the Kauśika Sūtra[10], the youngest son lights the fire reciting the verses. The Vaikhānasa lays down that the *Adhvaryu* priest should set fire to the pyre with his left hand[11]. The Āśvalāyana states that when the performer of the rites has recited the verse : "There living ones have separated from dead, they turn round from right to left

1. *Boud. Dh. S.* 3.5.5.6; 3.6.6.18; *Vas. D. S.* 1,19-20; *Ch. Up.* 5.10.9.
2. *Bau. Dh. S.* 1,7,18,18. Cf. also *Gau. Dh. S.* 23.1. It says, "They should pour hot liquor into the mouth of a Brahmin who has drunk *Surā* so that he may die."
3. Fausboll, Jātaka. V. No, 537, p. 457.
4. Om Prakash, op, cit., pp. 74-75.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. *ĀŚV. G. S. Kauṣ. G. S.; Vaikh. G. S.*
9. Ramgopal, op. cit., op. 357-62.
10. *Kauṣ. G. S.* V. 3.27-28.
11. *Vai. G. S.* V.5.

and go away without looking back. Having come to a reservoir of standing water, they once plunge into and emerge from it", then follows the period of impurity which varies from *Varṇa* to *Varṇa*[1]. Gautama lays down ten, eleven and twelve days' mourning for Brahmins, Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas respectively. This period is linked with the concept of impurity.[2]

CERTAIN BELIEFS :

Debts : It was believed that every Ārya was born with three debts, that is, a debt due to the *Ṛṣis*, a debt due to the *Pitṛs* (manes) and the debt due to the gods (*devas*). The debt due to the ṛṣis could be discharged by *brahmacarya*, the debt to the manes could be wiped off by procreation, and the debt due to the gods could be repaid by sacrifices[3]. These debts can be understood as the three functions to be fulfilled by a Brahmin or an Ārya. To these sometimes is added the debt one owes to to the men[4].

Tīrthas : It was also believed that five *tīrthas* exist in the hand of a Brahmin. The root of the finger is designated as the *devatīrtha*; the top of the finger is called the *ārṣatīrtha*; in the middle of the finger exists the *Agnitīrtha*; the space that exists between the thumb and *tarjanī* finger is called *pitṛtīrtha* and finally the *brahma-tīrtha* exists at the root of the thumb.[5] A Brahmin should sip water offered at the *Argha* ceremony by the *Brahmatīrtha*.[6]

Purity of the hand and mouth : The Āśvalāyana states that a sacrificer may offer the oblations into the hand of the Brahmins[7] with their permission instead of offering them into the fire.[8] In this connection a Brāhmaṇa passage reads, 'The mouth of the gods is the fire, the mouth of the gods is the

1. *Āśv. G. S.*
2. *Gaut. Dh.S.* 14.1-4. *Vas. Dh. S.* 27-30; *Vis. Dh, S.* 22.1-4.
3. *Bau. Gr. Paribhāṣā*, 1.1.1; *Bau.. Dh. S.*, II.6,11.36; *Satyā*. 4.
4. *Śat. Br.* 1.7.,2.1-5.
5. Satyāṣāḍhagṛhyaśeṣasūtra, 2.2.
6. Ibid.
7. *Āśv. G. S.*, 4.8.5.
8. Ibid. 4.8.4.

hand."[1] He should pour the oblation into right hand of a Brahmin.[2] It is also pointed out that the offerings deposited in the fire-mouths of the Brahmins, enriched by the faggots of of the Vedas, free a man from all sins.[3] The best *Agnihotra* consists in pouring the oblations into the mouths of the Brahmins. The *Agnihotra* performed in this manner does not go in vain.[4]

DUTIES OF A BRAHMIN :

By the time of the Sūtras the Brahmins in particular had become a well-organised pristhood.[5] And therefore their duties and privileges are clearly distinguished from those of the *varṇas*—kṣatriya, vaiśya and śūdra. In matter both spiritual and secular, the Gṛhya Sūtras also clearly differentiate the occupations, obligations, duties and privileges of the four divine castes[6]. According to Gautama, Āpastamba, Baudhāyana and Vasiṣṭha, the special duties and privileges of the Brahmins are the study and teaching of the Veda, sacrificing for themselves and others, and the receiving and giving of alms.[7] It should be noted here that the study of the Vedas, offering of sacrifices and the giving of gifts are the duties commonly enjoined on men of all the higher castes, while the other acts mentioned are the particular privileges and "principal means of livelihood."[8] But, if by adopting one of these he neglects the aforesaid duties, he is sure to incur sin.[9] Let us now take up the duties and occupations of the Brahmins first and see how they were performed ?

(*i*) *The Study of the Vedas* : The study of the Vedas was very

1. Āśv. 4.8.6.
2. *Satyā.* 15.1.55.
3. *Āp. Dh. S.* 30.6.
4. Ibid. 30.7.
5. *The Vedic Age,* Ed. Majumdar (R.C.), p. 508.
6. Ibid. p. 507.
7. *Gaut.* X. 1-3, 7,50; *Āp. Dh. S.* II. 5.10.5-8; *Bau. D. S.* I. 10.2-5, *Vas. Dh. S.* II. 13-19.
8. Kane (P. V.), *History of Dharmaśāstra,* Vol. II, pt. I, p. 105.
9. Haradatta on Gaut. X.3, quoted by Kane (P.V.), Ibid, p. 105.

KENDRIYA VIDYAPEETH
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closely connected with the Brahmins from the very beginning of the Aryan culture.[1] The *Upanayana* ceremony initiates and confers on the *Brahmacārin* the competence to study the Veda. In one of the older Upaniṣads[2] we are told that Śvetaketu Āruṇeya was asked by his father to lead the life of a student because there was no one in the family who did not study the Vedas and who was a Brahmin only in name (*brahma-Bandhu*). So the son took up the study of the Vedas at the age of twelve and came back at the age of twenty-four after mastering them all. The Gṛhya Sūtras also set forth the importance of the Vedic learning. The study of the Veda is recommended to every student and especially to a Brahmin student. It is rightly pointed out that "while Vedic study is binding on all belonging to the three twice-born castes, a life of learning or an intellectual career was reserved for the Brahmin".[3] Perhaps keeping in view the duties of a Brahmin, the authors of the Gṛhya Sūtras[4] have prescribed an age as young as eight for the initiation of a Brahmin child, this would give him ample time to master the Vedas and other subjects. The very word *Veda-pārugāḥ*[5] (well-versed in the vedas) suggests that the Brahmins studied the Vedas thoroughly.

In the Buddhist texts also we see many Brahmins, well versed in the Vedas and other subjects. In this connection we may cite here the names of Pokkharasādi of Ukkaṭṭha, and of Caṅkī of Opasada, etc.[6] The Jātakas also refer to the study of the Vedas, In the *Śvetaketu* Jātaka,[7] the priest says to the king that the Vedic study is not futile, it gives fame in this world. The *sela-sutta*[8] also refers to a Brahmin named Sela, who was

1. Kane (PV.), op. cit., Vol. II, pt I, p. 105.
2. *Ch. Up.* 6.1.1-2. See also *Mait. Up.* VII. 10.
3. S. K. Das : op. cit., P. 180.
4. *Śāṅ. G.S.* ii. 1,1-9; *Āśv. G.S.* i, 19,1-7; *Pār. G.S.* 5,36-31; *Go.G.S.* ii, 10.1-4.
5. *Gau. Dh.S*, 18; *Bau. Dh.S.* 11.3.24.
6. *Dīgh.N.* I. 3·8.30; *M.N.* II. 44.2.10; 45.1.1. In *M.N.* Āsvalāyana, Brahmāyu and Jānusoni were also described as the men of great intellect and learning.
7. Fausboll, *Śvetaketu-Jātaka*, III. No. 377, p. 232-237.
8. Kaśyapa (B.J.) : Khuddaka Nikāya Vol I.
Sela-Sutta, p. 354, (*Uddālaka Jātaka*), IV. No. 487, p. 29-304.

the master of the three Vedas and of other sciences; he used to teach the Vedas to three hundred students. Hence, we may say that the Vedic study was considered the essence of the Brahminhood in the period indicated by the abovementioned sources.

(*ii*) *Sacrifices* : The Sūtras prescribe the performing of the sacrifices as the duty of the Brahmin. The Śrauta Śūtra texts[1] enumerate certain sacrifices which could be undertaken only by the Brahmins. These are the *Sautrāmaṇi* and the *sattras*. These sacrifices belong exclusively to the Brahmins. But there were a few Brahmins who were barred from performing these sacrifices. Thus Jaimanīya[2] forbids the Brahmins, belonging to the Bhṛgu Śaunaka and Vasiṣṭha gotras, from performing a *sattra*. The Brahmins could not perform the *Rājasūya* sacrifice, because only the Kṣatriyas were allowed to perform it, with Brahmins acting as priests[3]. On the other hand, the Brahmins could perform the sacrifice called *Bṛhaspatisava*[4] which was no less important than the *Rājasūya* sacrifice.

The Jaina texts also refer to the performance of the sacrifices by the Brahmins. Mahāvīra is said to have stayed in the sacrificial house of a Brahmin of Campā during the rainy season.[5]

(*iii*) *Alms-giving* : These works do not throw any light on this duty. Since it is enumerated among the duties of a Brahmin, therefore, we can presume that the Brāhmaṇa also used to give alms to others.

GAINFUL OCCUPATIONS :

Having examined, though briefly the duties enjoined upon the Brahmins, let us now discuss the various means of living adopted by Brahmins. Here the pride of the place goes to the

1. *Kātyāyana. Śr. S.* I. 6.13.
   See also Jaminī, VI. 6.16-23; Keith : *Religion And Philosophy of the Veda*, p. 346 Hos. Vol. 32.
2. *Jaiminīya*, VI. 6.24-26.
3. *Āp. Ś.S.* xv ii; *Bau. Ś.S.* xii; *Kāt. Ś.S.* xv; *Āśv. Ś.S.* ix. 3.4; *Śāṅ. Ś.S.* xv. 12.27.
4. *Āśv. Ś.S.* ix. 9.19; *Bau.Ś.S.* xviii. 1.
5. Jain (J.C.), op. cit., p. 142.

teaching of the Vedas, to acting as priests at sacrifices, both big or small as also to accepting generally petty but in certain cases, fairly substantial amount in alms.

Needless to say, this does not exhaust the list. We find the Brahmins serving the king as *Purohita* or minister even or as commanders. Instances are not wanting when a Brahmin sets himself up as a king. We find him engaged in trade, in agriculture and in many other occupations besides.

The first is the best known and quite a large number seem to have adopted this way of life, though we are not sure about their percentage among the entire Brahmin population. We also do not know the respective share of income from teaching (*guru-dakṣiṇā*), from sacrifices (*dakṣiṇā*) and from alms in their total income. We give here under the details of these three activities as gleaned from contemporary literature.

OCCUPATIONS :

Teaching of the Vedas : The Brahmanical texts reveal that it was his "duty to specialize in the spiritual ideas and broadcast them",[1] to others. According to the Sūtras, teaching was recommended as the chosen means of livelihood, yet from the Vedic period up to the period of the Sūtras", teaching of Vedic literature was almost universally in the hands of the Brahmins".[2] According to Āpastamba[3] only a Brahmin can be the teacher, but in time of distress, when no good teacher of Brahmin caste is available, a Brahmin may have a Kṣatriya for a teacher. It also says that during the period of studentship a Brahmin should only follow the Kṣatriya teacher. But he should not perform such acts as washing or touching his feet. The Brahmin student is asked not to follow such a teacher, after his study is completed.

From a scrutiny, however, of the Upaniṣads, it is learnt

1. Mahadevan (T.M. P.), *Essays in East-West Philosophy* Ed. Moore. pp. 5-10.
2. Kane (P.V.), op. cit., Vol. II, pt. I, p. 108.
3. *Āp. Dh. S.* II. 2.4.25-28. See also *Gau. Dh. S.* VII. 1-3.

that in certain branches, the Kṣatriyas were equally to the fore.[1] Thus we find Yājñavalkya seeking spiritual enlightenment from the king Janaka.[2] But from a passage[3] of the Bṛhadāraṇyaka we learn that the Kṣatriya felt that they were not meant to be teachers. Teaching was solely the job of the Brahmins. In a passage Ajātaśatru tells Gārgya that it is not unusual that a Brahmin should approach a Kṣatriya for learning. However during the conversation, the king is convinced about his own superiority in respect of this knowledge. So he accepts him as his pupil. Deussen cites six passages in which the Brahmins are depicted as asking the Kṣatriya for the knowledge of the soul and on this basis he declares that "the real cherisher of those thoughts was originally the caste of the Kṣatriyas rather than that of the priests."[4] R.G. Bhandarkar[5] also subscribes to the views of Deussen." On the other hand, Hopkins,[6] Barth,[7] Macdonell[8] and Keith[9] do not agree with them as the germs of the philosophy of the Upaniṣads are already found in the Ṛgveda, the Atharvaveda and other texts. Prof. Kane also says that the Kṣatriyas did not discover the doctrine of the soul because the Upaniṣads also refer to many Brahmins who propounded various aspects of the doctrine of the soul (*Brahmavidyā*).[10] According to Prof Kane there are not enough instances to enable us to make a general statement.[11] Among those Brahmins who studied and discussed the knowledge of the soul, Yājñavalkya stands foremost.

1. Deussen, *Philosophy of the Upaniṣads*, pp. 17-19.
2. *Br. Up.* IV. 2.1
3. Ibid. II. 1.15.
   See also *Kau. Up.* IV. -119.
4. Deussen, op. cit. pp. 17-19. These passages are *Br. Up.* II 1. VI.2 *Ch. Up.* V. 3 and V. 11., *Kau. Up.* I. 1 and IV. 1.
5. Bhandarkar (R.K.) : *Vaiṣṇavism and Śaivism*, p. 9.
6. Hopkins, *Ethics of India*, 1924. p. 63.
7. Barth (A.A.) : *Religions of India*, p. 65.
8. Macdonell and Keith, *Vedic Index*, Vol. II, p. 206.
9. Keith has examined this problem thoroughly in *The Philosophy and Religion of the Vedas, Harvard Oriental Series*, Vol. 31, pp.
10. Kane, op. cit. Vol. II, pt. I, p. 107.
11. Ibid., footnote, p. 106.

According to the Buddhist sources the teaching was done by the Brahmins of course with the exception of a few Kṣatriya teachers. These sources supply us with the names of numerous Brahmins who were highly learned and who taught three hundred or more students.[1] In addition to the male Brahmin teachers, certain Brahmin ladies also used to teach the students.

WORKING AS PRIESTS :

(*a*) *Priesthood* : In the early days of Indian civilization, 'not only the householder but even the petty prince could offer sacrifices to gods for himself and his people, the ritual being very simple."[2] Thus "every man was his own priest."[3] With the growth of the military and administrative responsibilities, the king as well as the warriors had little time for ceremonials. In the meantime the ritual tended to become more complicated and elaborate. Thus it was impossible for any one to perform two jobs, at one time. Therefore, a need of hieratic order. composed of the intellectual among the non-fighter was felt, who could wholly devote themselves to the performance of the highly developed ritual and to the preservation of sacred hymnology.[4] In this way two personalities emerged, the sacrificer (*Yajamāna*) and the priest (*Purohita*). Thus anybody could be a sacrificer and a priest. By the time of the Brāhmaṇas, the profession of the priest became more or less hereditary. "The separation between the Brahmins and the Kṣatriyas, so far as the priestly functions were concerned was complete".[5] The rule that no one but a Brahmin could act as

1. *Majj. N.* II. 95.166. (4.45.1.3.)
   Duarjana-Jātaka (I.64) says, "A teacher of world-wide fame used to teach five hundred students.
   Saṁyutta. No. II., p.118,f; De (G.D.), *Significance And Importance of Jātakas*, p. 101. "The author observes..... "the Brahmins formed the *ācariya* or the *guru* class to which no other caste seems to have made the least claim.
2. Majumdar (R.C.), *Vedic Age*, p. 384.
3. Dass (A C.), *Rigvedic Culture*, 131.
4. Majumdar (R.C), *Vedic Age*, p. 384,
5. Dutt (N.K.), op. cit., p. 88-89.

a priest in the sacrifices is difinitely laid down. The gods do not eat the food offered by a king who has no priest.[1] Due to shift from the elaborate and expensive rituals of the Brāhmaṇas to the doctrines of *Ātman* and *Paramātman* in the Upaniṣadic period the high position which the Brahmin priests had so far occupied could no longer be maintained.[2] But the Upaniṣads do not show us a non-Brahmin as a priest at sacrifices. During the Sūtra period the Brahmins came forward with more power, with more pretentions, prerogatives and above all with increased influence over the masses According to N.K. Dutt, there was no central organisation of the Brahmin priests, because they controlled no temples where people could worship.[3] But on the basis of the rules regarding the acceptance of invitation to officiate at a sacrifice after necessary queries, pertaining to the fee, the name of the officiating priests, the nature of the sacrifice, etc. Prof Apte concludes that there existed a well organised priesthood.[4] Now this separate body of *Purohita* had as its members only the Brahmins.[5] This is suggested by the epithet *ārtvijīna* denoting a person qualified in the priestly duties (ṛtvikkarmārhati, kātyāyana) which according to Patañjali was applied to the member of a Brahmin family.[6] According to Śāṅkhāyana no body should serve as a priest without proving his decent from three or ten generations of ṛṣis.[7] But according to scholars, these references indirectly indicate that the unbroken decent in a Brahmin family was yet an ideal and not an actuality".[8] The Kātyāyana declares that "to officiate at the sacrifices and to eat at the sacrifices only the Brahmins are eligible".[9] And this job of the officiating priest should go to a Brahmin who must be an expert in the Vedic lore and mantras and who is well-versed in

1. Dutt. p. 89 (*Ait. Br.* VIII. 24.).
2. Ibid. op. cit., pp. 20-21.
3. Dutt (N.K.), op. cit., p. 22.
4. Apte (V.M.), op. cit., pp. 9-12.
5. *Satyā. G. S.* 10.1.2., *Vedic Index*, Vol. I.112.
6. Agrawal (V.S.). op. cit., p. 372 (p. V. 1.71.)
7. *Śāṅ. Ś. S.* 18.14.8.
8. Das (S.K.), op. cit., p.181.
9. *Kāt. Ś. S.* 1 2.8.

the art of the sacrificial ritual.[1] According to the Jaiminīya those Brahmins should conduct sacrifices who are well-versed in the Vedas, who are of good conduct, who perform sacrifices with persons of good conduct and with men proficient in Vedic lore. But he should not do so for the sinful, nor in company of a low-born priest nor one engaged in sinful acts. He should not also ask, "What is the fee ?"[2] It is said that the Brahmins should be the priests of those who are initiated and not of those who are not initiated Being the custodians of Vedic knowledge, it was but natural that the Brahmin should claim the Purohitaship at the sacrifices. In this connection Āpastamba lays down that one could be initiated into this profession of priest-ship only after an approved term of apprenticeship with a master.[4] The Kauṣītaki empowers the teacher to confer *ārṣeyam* or Brahminhood upon his students, apparently if the latter were inclined to adopt this profession and had the capacity for the same.[5] It was believed that the merit accruing from the performance of a sacrifice goes to seventeen initiated Brahmins.[6] The Kṣatriya and the Vaiśya cannot become priests of the *sattra* sacrifices (which extend over many days and years).[7] The Dharma Sūtras severely condemn those Brahmins who perform sacrifices for Śūdras. Gautama says that a Brahmin should renounce one's father if he sacrifices for a Śūdra.[8] With reference to his duties on behalf of the *Yajamāna* a priest was called *Yājaka*. Pāṇini's Sūtra, 11.2.9., implies that when Yājaka is compounded with the words *Brāhmaṇa* or Kṣatriya (*Brāhmaṇa-Yājaka* or *Kṣatriya-Yājaka*), it denotes the sacrificer for whom the sacrifice is being performed.[9]

In the early Vedic society, the right[10] of keeping the sacred

1. *Kauthuma G.S.* 12.
2. *Jaim. Ś.S.* 10.
3. *Satyā G S.* 16.1.14.
4. *Āp. Dh.S.* (S.B.E.) II, p. 3.
5. *Kauṣītaki Sūtra* 55.
6. *Satyā. G S.* 16.1.20.
7. *Jaimini Purvamīmāṁsā.* VI. 6.18.
8. *Gau. Dh. S.* XX. 1.
9. Agrawala (V.S.), op. cit., p. 372.
10. Dutt (N K.), op. cit., p. 152.

fire alight in every household had belonged to, and in fact was obligatory upon every member (initiated adult, male). But gradually it became restricted to the priestly class.[1] In the domestic sacrifices which are described in the Gṛhya-sūtras, the householder could perform them himself without the help of a Brahmin priest. On such occasions he acted as a *Hotṛ* and also as a *Brahman* (priest), But if due to unavoidable circumstances, the householder could not perform the sacrifice himself, he could engage a Brahmin for this purpose.[2] According to Āpastamba the assistance of a Brahmin is essential in all the sacrifices except at *Dhanvantari* and *Śūlagava* sacrifices.[3] While commenting on the Śāṅkhāyana, 1.8.6 and 7, the commentator observes that there was ordinarily no Brahmin present, but his place was taken by a bundle of kuśa grass or fifty blades.[4]

Selection of a priest : The Gṛhyasūtras attach much importance to the post of priest and therefore enjoin the people to select the best Brahmin for the same. The Āśvalāyana[5] conveys the same idea when it gives rules for selecting priests to officiate at the Śrauta sacrifices as well. According to scholars these 'rules give us an insight into the cult of priesthood".[6] The Satyāṣāḍha Sūtra[7] states that only the Brahmins of good descent should be chosen to act as priests. It further adds that these sixteen priests should be selected one by one.[8] But the Śāṅkhāyana says that the sacrificer may choose four priests or appoint all the seventeen priests at once.[9] The Āśvalāyana[10] emphasises on the physical fitness of persons who are to act as priests and says that a sacrificer should select only those persons who possess neither less nor superfluous limbs, taking into account the physique of the priest's mother and father. They should be

1. *Kātyāyana, Ś S.* 1.6.16.
2. *Go.G.S.* 1.6.21; 1.4.15,16; Also see *Khādira. G.S.* 1.1.19.
3. *Āśv. G.S.* 1.3.6.
4. S.B.E. Vol. XXIX, p. 24.
5. *Āśva.G.S.* 1.23.
6. Apte (V.M.), op. cit., pp. 9-12.
7. *Satyā, Ś S.* 10.1.2.
8. Ibid. 10.1.2.
9. *Śāṅ. Ś.S.* 5.1.1-2.
10. *Āśv.G.S.* 1.23.1.

young and strong.[1] Śāṅkhāyana, on the other hand, asks a sacrificer to also take into account the intellectual requisite of the priests. Therefore, the *Yajamāna* for the Soma sacrifice should choose both young and learned men as his priests.[2] In the time of Pāṇini the selection of the priests must have depended on their ritual for which they were required.[3] He says that "experts who made a special study of the complicated ritual of *Soma kratus* like the *Agniṣṭoma*, *Vājapeya*, were named Āgniṣṭoma, Vājapeyika in that order.[4] It is these specialists who were invited to perform the sacrifices.[5] The *Brahman* is to be chosen first, then the *Hotṛ* followed by the *Adhvaryu* and the *Udgātṛ*.[6] Either only four or all the sixteen priests that usually officiate at the *Ahīna* (lasting for more than one day) and *Ekāha* sacrifices may be chosen.[7] The Āśvalāyana[8] says that after the selection, one should offer them *Madhuparka*. Jaiminī[9] lays down that men of good conduct should employ priests who are well-versed in the Vedas and whose relatives are experts in this lore. The sacrificers should not employ a sinner or a low born man for the purpose. Does it mean that, some Brahmins, who used to perform sacrifices for the Śūdras and others were considered low-born or sinners or that sometimes the low-born used to act as priests at certain sacrifices. According to the Satyāṣāḍha[10] Brahmins should act as the priests of the initiated. And for those who are not, they should perform the sacrifice. Pāṇini mentions the office and duties of *Purohita*' as *Paurohitya*.[11]

1. *Āśv. G.S.* 1.23.2.
2. *Śāṅ. Ś S.* 5.1.1-2.
3. Agarwal (V.S.), op. cit., p. 372.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. *Āśv. G.S.* 1.23.3.
   Kāt. Ś.S. 7.1.8.
7. *Āśv. G.S.* 1.23.3.
8. Ibid.
9. *Jaiminīya, Ś.S.* 10.
10. *Satyā, Ś.S.* 16.1.14.
11. Pāṇini, *A.S.* V. 1.128.

Sixteen priests[1] are required to perform at the big sacrifices such as the *Agniṣṭoma* and the *Aśvamedha* etc. The names of the priests are *Hotā*, *Maitrāvaruṇa* or *Praśāstā*, *Acchāvāka*, *Grāvastut* (belonging to the Ṛgveda), *Udgatā*, *Prastotā*, *Pratihartā Subrahmaṇya*, *Adhvaryu*, *Pratiṣṭhātā*, *Neṣṭhā*, *Unnetā*, *Brahman*, *Brāhmaṇāchaṁsī*, *Agnīdhra*. According to the Satyāṣāḍha,[2] twelve, thirteen, fifteen, sixteen, seventeen, twentynine and thirty-three priests are required for the sacrifices called *Agniṣṭoma*, *Atyagniṣṭoma*, *Uktha*, *Ṣodaṣini*, *Vājapeya*, *Aptoryāma* respectively. Another Śrauta sūtra[3] lays much stress upon the good qualities of these priests and also expects them from the same *Pravara* and from the learned and pure food eater's family. In addition to these who had the rank of *Ṛtvijas* (Officiating priests) there were other priests like the *Sadasya*, the *camasādhvaryu* and the śamitṛ, who were also chosen to take part in a Śrauta sacrifice.[4] The Vaikhānasa[5] declares that the dependants of Vasiṣṭha i.e. having the *Vasiṣṭha gotra*, *Bhārgava*, *Aṅgirasa* and Āyasa respectively are the great priests. Therefore these priests stood at the head of other priests at the sacrifices and thus they were entitled to special honours. While on the other hand Kātyāyana[6] singles out amongst the Brahmins, the Brahmins of *Kāṇva* and *Kāśyapa gotras* who are not fit for receiving the remains of the *havi* oblation even if they beg for it. He may, of course, give this to other priests officiating at the sacrifice.[7] We may also note that Agni is often described as the *hotā* of the gods[8] and sometimes the sacrificer prays to him as *hotā* at the sacrifice.[9] *Hotā* generally recited the ṛcas of the Ṛgveda at the sacrifice.[10] An *Adhvaryu* priest used to perform acts

1. *Kāt. Ś.S.* 7.1.7, *Vedic Index*, Vol. I. 113.
2. *Satyā, Ś.S.* 10.8.25.
3. *Vaikh. S.S.* 12.1.
4. Apte (V.M.), op. cit., p. 12.
5. *Vai. Ś.S.* 12.1.
6. *Kāt. Ś.S.* 10.3.33.
7. *Kāt. Ś.S.* 10.3.31.
8. *Satyā. G.S.* 2.1.3.
9. Ibid. 10.1.2.
10. *Satyā. G.S.* 1.1.2.

prescribed by the Yajurveda[1] and similarly an *Udgatā* performed the acts prescribed by the Sāmaveda.[2] While the work of a Brahman priest was to supervise the work of the other priests and to rectify their mistakes as he was supposed to be well-versed in all the four Vedas.[3]

In the Buddhist canonicals there is not a single instance which refers to a non-Brahmin priest at any sacrifice, which shows that the Brahmins alone acted as priests.[4] Many of the Brahmins were earning their livelihood through these sacrifices and were patronised by the kings.[5] The kings employed Brahmins to avert the evil befalling them. Thus we are told that Maheśvaradatta a priest, well-versed in the four Vedas, used to perform sacrifices to avert the calamities threatening a certain king.[6]

(*iii*) *Śrāddha* : The Gṛhya Sūtras would like the Brahmins to be fed at the completion of every ritual.[7] Besides this injunction of the Gṛhya Sūtras, we have in almost all the Gṛhya Sūtras and the Dharma-sūtras the description of the ceremony called *Śrāddha*, where a number of Brahmins are served food. The *homa*, the offering of the *piṇḍa* and the gratification of Brahmins by food are three constituents of the *Śrāddha* ceremony.[8] Emphasising the importance of the *Śrāddha*. Baudhāyana says that the performance of the rites for the Manes bestows long life, heavens, fame and prosperity.[9] Apart from what has been said by the Baudhāyana about the importance of this ritual, this is how the Ancients cherished the memory of their dead relatives.[10] The *Śrāddhas* discussed in the sūtras are *Sapiṇḍīkaraṇa*, *Ekoddiṣṭa Ābhyudayika*, *Māsika* or *Māsī Śrāddha*

1. Satya. G.S. 1.1.2.
2. Ibid. 1.1.1,2.
3. Ibid.
4. Faüsboll, *Jātaka* III, No. 314.
5. Ibid.
6. Faüsboll, *Jātaka* III. 362, *M.N.* II. 45.1.1.
7. *Āśv. G.S.* I. 18.13; *Khadira G.S.* 1.1.3.
8. Kane (P.V.), op. cit., IV, p. 335.
   Ap.Dh.S. II. 7.16.2. says the same.
9. *Bau. Dh.S.* II. 8.1.
10. Ramgopal, op. cit., p. 371.

or *Pārvaṇa Śrāddha and Anvadharyu*.[1] Evidently the sūtras do not consider each and every Brahmin worthy of being invited at the *Śrāddha* ceremony. They specify the Brahmins to be so invited as also those that are not to be invited. Those to be invited should possess Vedic learning, should be of excellent character and of meritorious conduct, pure and neither deficient in limbs nor having excessive limbs.[2] A proof of this Āpastamba says as follows : Those persons sanctify the company at a *Śrāddha* who have studied the three Vedic verses in which the word *madhu* occurs, and have studied the *Trisuparṇa*, the *Mantras* required for the four sacrifices. Also those who have performed the four sacrifices, those who keep the five fires (Pañcāgni), know the *Sāman* called *Jyeṣṭha*, carry out the duties of daily Vedic study, the sons of one who has studied the Vedic lore and are able to teach the Vedas with its *aṅgas* and a *śrotriya*.[3] On the other hand, certain Brahmins were declared to be *apāṅkteya* on grounds, such as physical or moral lapses, criminal conduct, pursuits of certain impure and improper avocations, and living in certain impure countries.[4] It has been rightly pointed out by Apte[5] that "emphasis on qualities such as spotlessness and proficiency in learning brings out the high standard of purity and culture expected from them. For the learned author, the feasting at the *Śrāddha* ceremony is more a disinterested homage to the whole qualities of the spiritually minded Brahmins than a sop to a worldly-minded priesthood"[6]. The rule that the Brahmins so invited, must not be relatives, either on the mother's side or father's side, nor related to the host in the capacity of a *Ṛtvij*, teacher or pupil, was framed to counter the apprehension that the sacrificer may not use the invitation in a bargaining spirit.[7] An examination of the qualities required of a Brahmin in connection with the *Śrāddha* show that 'learning

1. For details see Kane, op. cit., Vol. II, pt. I and Ramgopal, op. cit., p. 369-70.
2. Kane (P.V), op. cit., Vol. III, pt. I, p. 384.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Apte (V.M.), op. cit., p. 8.
6. Ibid. op. cit., p. 8.
7. Ibid.

out-weighs all other considerations."[1] Śāṅkhāyana says that a Brahmin who has studied the Vedas and performed austerities and the sacred ritual, is an ideal Brahmin.[2] One should not ordinarily invite a friend or a *sagotra* Brahmin even though he may be learned, but these are not *apāṅkteya*. Āpastamba[3] says that a Brahmin suffering from white leprosy or baldness or guilty of adultery or being the son of a professional soldier or a degraded Brahmin from a Brahmin woman, should not be invited at the *Śrāddha*, as such persons defile the company. The Vasiṣṭha also gives a long list of such Brahmins and asks Yajamāna to refrain from inviting the naked (ascetics), blind men and those having deformed nails.[4]

The Sūtras have a large variety of views regarding the number of Brahmins to be invited at the *śrāddha* ceremony. According to Āśvalāyana,[5] at the Pārvaṇa *śrāddha* (performed on a parvan day i.e. on Amāvasyā), the Abhyudayika *śrāddha*, the *Ekoddiṣṭa* or *Kāmya*, the larger the number of the Brahmins, the greater is the reward; that in no case should a person invite only one Brahmin at a *Śrāddha* meant for all the Manes. Optionally he may invite only one Brahmin except at the first *Śrāddha*, or he may invite, two or three Brahmins for each of the three paternal ancestors. The Śāṅkhāyana[6] and Kauṣītaki,[7] prescribe an uneven number of Brahmins, at least three, to sit down as (respresenting) the Fathers. *Gautama*[8] lays down 'He shall feed an uneven number of Brahmins at least nine or as many as he is able to feed. If five were invited, two would be for the gods and three for the manes. If seven, then four for the gods and three for the manes and so on. Vasiṣṭha[9] and Baudhāyana[10] favour two Brahmins for the rite of the Gods and

1. Apte (V.M.), op.cit., p. 8
2. *Śāṅ. G.S.* 1.2.
3. *Āp Dh.S.* 2.7.17.21.
4. *Vas. Dh.S.* 11.19.
5. *Āśv. G.S.* IV. 7.2-3.
6. *Śāṅ. G.S.* 6.1.2.
7. *Kau. G.S.* 3.14.1-2.
8. *Gau. Dh.S.* 15 2 7-9,11.
9. *Vas. Dh.S.* XI. 27.
10. *Bau. Dh.S.* 2.8.29.

three for the manes, According to these sūtras even a rich person should not invite a large company. Giving reasons in support of this injunction, *Baudhāyana*[1] and *Vasiṣṭha*[2] declare, "A large company destroys these five desiderata, viz. the respectful treatment (of those invited), the securing of the proper place (for example one sloping southwards) and time, purity and (the choice of) meritorious Brahmins; therefore one should not desire a large company." The performer should make a request to the Brahmins on the preceding day, then request again on the day of the *Śrāddha* itself, and then a third time (with words 'food is ready, come').[3]

(*iv*) *Feeding of the Brahmins on other occasions* : Apart from the feeding of the Brahmins at the *śrāddha* ceremony, there were other occasions when the Brahmins were entertained with food. For instance, the Śāṅkhāyana enjoins that at the end of the sacrificial acts (follows) the feeding of the Brahmins[4] who are endowed with (pleasant) voice, form, age, learning, moral character and right conduct.[5] Learning, however, outweighs every (other merit).[6] A learned Brahmin should not be passed over.[7] Gobhila says that on the occasion of a lucky event (as the birth of a son etc.) or of a meritorious work (as the dedication of a pond or a garden), *Yajamāna* should give food to an even number of Brahmins.[8] While describing the merit of feeding Brahmins the *Śāṅkhāyana* declares, "He who gives food even once to a Brahmin, performing sacred rites, who has studied (the Vedas), who is old due to his learning and devoted to austerities, hunger will not befall him any more."[9] In this very context Gobhila says that one who desires to gain a hundred cart-loads of gold, should keep the vow (of fasting) through one fortnight and should on the first day of a dark

1. Bau.Dh.S., 2.8.30.
2. *Vas. XI.* 28.
3. *Āp. Dh.S* II. 7.17.11-13.
4. *Śāṅ. G.S.* 1.2.1-4; *Khadira, G.S.* 1.1.3.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. *Go. G.S.* 3 24.
9. *Śāṅkh. G.S.* 1.2.6.

fortnight feed the Brahmins with boiled milk-rice prepared of one Kāṁsa of rice,[1] The Brahmins are described by Śāṅkhāyana as the intermediaries between the gods and men.[2] "Whatsoever deity he may wish to please at any sacrifice, destining it to that (deity) in his mind, he shall give (the food)"[3] to a Brahmin. It adds that an oblation deposited in a similar person will never miss its way to that deity.[4] A Brahmin was considered the vessel of the gods (in which they receive whatever was given to them).[5] Baudhāyana lays down that one should offer food, delicious roots, fruits, and vegetables to the Brahmins. Thus ends the sacrifice pertaining to men.[6] At another place it is said that one should offer new fruits and flowers to the Brahmins.[7] The remnants of the *havis* were also given to the Brahmins.[8] The Vasiṣṭha is of the opinion that oblation and libation should be given to a *śrotriya* because offerings made to a non-*śrotriya* neither reach the manes nor the gods.[9] The Agniveśya Gṛhya sūtra records the offering of the fourth part of a betel (*tāmbūla*) to the Brahmin.[10] At the time of entering a new house the owner should feed Brahmins who have been eating the food of that family for a very long time, i.e. for a number of generations.[11]

In his discussions with Gotama, Āsvalāyana says that an educated Brahmin should be fed at a *Śrāddha* or cereal or in Sthālīpāka ceremony or in the rites of hospitality.[12] It is stated in the Mātaṅga Jātaka that Māṇḍavya-Kumāra the son of Diṭṭhamaṅgalike provided food for Brahmins and that sixteen thousand Brahmins were fed continually.[13] The Brahmins were

1. *Go. G.S.* IV. 10.17.
2. *Śāṅ. G S.* 1.27.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid. 1.2.8.
5. Ibid.
6. *Bau. Dh. S.* 2.6.5.
   Bau. G.S. 2.1.8.
7. *Bau. G.S.* 2.1.9.
8. *Khādira. G.S.* 2.1.28.
9. *Vas. Dh.S.* 3.8.
10. Agni G.S. 2.4.10, p. 73.
11. *Kāṭha. G.S.* 1.12.2.
12. *Majj. N.* II. 43.1.9.
13. Fausboll, *Mātaṅga-Jātaka*, No. 497. Vol. IV, See also V. 537.

invited and given food, drink and the place for rest.[1] According to this Jātaka tale those who give food and drink, to the sages and Brahmins with faith will go to the heavens, all blameless after death.

In the Jaina texts a king Bharata used to feed the Brahmins daily and distinguished them from others by putting the mark of Kākiṇī jewel on their persons.[2] Thus both the Brahmanical and the non-Brahmanical works show that it was customary and even obligatory to feed the Brahmins at different occasions. Apte has rightly pointed out that "the feeding of learned Brahmins, calling forth blessing is universally laid down as the concluding feature of every sacrament".[3]

(*v*) *Accepting gifts* : A Brahmin could accept a gift from persons of good character. The Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad states that the Brahmins are prohibited from accepting gifts from the unworthy and also from those officiating as priests for these persons[4]. And further, only a learned Brahmin could accept gifts.[5] Gautama[6] states that for his livelihood and support, *Yogakṣema*, a Brahmin should approach a king (or a rich man). Vasiṣṭha[7] says that a hungry Brahmin should approach for help a king or his pupil or other unworthy men able and willing to offer a sacrifice. But he should not accept a gift from irreligious or other wicked persons. He may go to worthy *dvijas* if he fails to receive any help from the above-mentioned individuals.[8] However in an emergency a Brahmin could obtain gifts or wealth even from a Śūdra. This is permitted in case of marriage or for a sacrifice already begun.[9] If at the completion of his Vedic study a student found himself resourceless to recompensate the teacher, he could accept a gift from a Śūdra or an *Ugra*.[10] It was the duty

1. Fausboll, *Citta-Sambhūta-Jātaka* No. 498, Vol. IV.
2. Jain (J.C.), op. cit., pp. 141-42.
3. Apte (V.M.), op, cit., p. 8.
4. *Br. Up.* 4.1.3.
5. Ibid. 5.14.5-6.
6. *Gau. Dharmasūtrā*, 9.63, also *Viṣṇu Dh.S.* 63.1.
7. *Vas. Dh.S.* 12.2.
8. *Gau. Dh.S.* 17.1-2.
9. *Gaut.* 18.24.
10. *Āp. Dh.S.* 1.2.7.20-21.

of the king to support Brahmins unable to earn their living.[1] Vasiṣṭha[2] prescribes that a man, learned in the śāstras, is reduced to ashes like dry fuel, if he accepts a gift of gold, land, horses, cows, food, clothes, sesame and ghee; that Brahmin devoid of learning and austerities but desirous of accepting gifts sinks (into hell) like one sitting in a stone-boat and that a Brahmin who is not learned should be afraid of receiving gifts. The donor was also asked to select only those endowed with qualities for gifts and not those who lacked in those qualities. Thus Āpastamba and Vasiṣṭha prescribe[3] "One should invite for feeding in all religious acts Brahmins who are pure and who have studied the Veda; gifts should be distributed at a proper time and place and on the occasions of purificatory rites and when there is a worthy acceptor". According to Āpastamba[4] a Brahmin should accept whatever is offered, even from one guilty of bad actions except an unchaste lady, an impotent person and a *patita*. Vasiṣṭha[5] has given a list of similar persons.

In the Buddhist texts kings are shown as regularly giving alms to the Brahmins. At one place the king of Aṅga is said to have given five hundred *Kahāpaṇas* to the Brahmins.[6] But certain Brahmins of high conduct, who did not need them, sometimes refused to accept them saying, "I have no need of cows"[7]. Food, drink, shelter, clothes and other essential things were offered to the Brahmins.[8] Elsewhere a king says that by giving gifts to many, and by satisfying the priests and the Brahmins, he has cleared his path to heavens[9]. The importance of this practice is emphasised as follows, "Let him not seek to deprive monks or Brahmins of any gift previously bestowed on them and let him in no way hinder mendicants at the time of distri-

1. *Gau. Dh.S.* X. 9-10.
2. *Vas. Dh.S.*
3. *Āp. Dh.S.* II. 6.15.9-10.
   See also *Vas. Dh.S.* 3,8, and IV. 30.
4. *Āp. Dh.S.* 1.6.19.11-14.
5. *Vas. Dh.S.* XIV. 2.11.
6. *M.N.* II. 44.2.10.
7. Fausboll, J. III. No. 403 (*Atthiseṇa*), p. 351.
8. Fausboll, J. IV, No 498, p. 390.
9. Fausboll, J. V. No. 537, p. 456.

buting alms.[1]

The Jaina canons also refer to this practice of making gifts to the Brahmins. Kings showed liberality towards them by offering gifts.[2] It is said that Nandas of Pātaliputra gave away wealth to the Brahmins. Vararuci, a Brahmin received one hundred and eight *dīnāras* every day for reciting an equal number of verses in praise of the king.[3] King Bharata used to feed them daily.[4] Common people used to give gifts and paid reverence to them.[5]

Things received in Dakṣiṇā : Although the Brahmins received *dakṣiṇā* in various forms on all occasions (at the end of a student's tenure, at the end of the sacrifice etc.), for convenience, we are discussing it only here. It need not be stated that no religious act (sacrifice, śrāddha etc.) could be completed, without *dakṣiṇā*.

In this connection, we read in the Śāṅkhāyana, "Let him give something to the Brahmins for a *Sthālīpāka* and for other rites.[6] Objects so received by the Brahmin (priests) were a cow,[7] a horse,[8] a vessel filled with something,[9] some other animal,[10] a garment,[11] curd,[12] honey,[13] *madhuparka*,[14] a mixture of honey and sugar,[15] a brown cow,[16] gold,[17] silver,[18]

1. Fausboll, J. VI. No. 545, p. 255.
2. Jain (J.C.), op. cit., p. 141-42.
3. Ibid.
4. Jain (J.C.), op. cit., p. 141-42.
5. Ibid.
6. *Śāṅ. G.S.* 1.14.11.
7. *Kh.G.S.* 4.1.6., Kh. 2.5.4, *Bau.G.S.* 1.4.38, *Agni.G.S.* 2.5.9, p.88.
8. *Śāṅ.G.S.* 1.14.17, *Ap.Ś.S.* 5.6.20.7.
9. *Go.G.S.* 1.9.5., *Kh.G.S.* 2.1.29.
10. *Kh.G.S.* 3.4.29.
11. *Āp.Ś.S.* 6.8.31.5., *Bau.G. Śeṣasūtra.* 1.4.10, *Agni.G.S.* 2.5.9., *Jai.G.S.* 1.5., *Jai.Ś.S.* 10.2.8.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.
15. *Āp.Ś.S.* 6.8.31.5.
16. Ibid.
17. *Bau.G.Śeṣasūtra.* 1.4.10. *Agni G.S.* 2.4.9, p.70; *Jai.G.S.* 1.7., *Vaikh.Ś.S.* 1.7, *Jai.Ś.S.* 10.2.8.
18. Ibid.

brass,[1] śarāva (a dish full of food),[2] iron objects,[3] goat,[4] a chariot,[5] earrings,[6] shoes,[7] or an umbrella.[8] Sometimes specific objects are sought to be given to the *hotā*, *adhvaryu*, and *Udgātā*. Thus a goat or a pot filled with food falls to the share of a Brahmin, a horse to a *hotā*, and a cow to an *adhvaryu*.[9] The amount of *dakṣiṇā* varied with the size of the sacrifice. Thus in the *Vājapeya*, all the priests received sixteen chariots apiece.[10] Another text prescribes a *dakṣiṇā* of a thousand cows and a hundred horses.[11] At the time of marriage, a Brahmin bride-groom would receive a cow.[15] In the *godāna* ceremony a priest would receive an ox and a cow from a Brahmin donor, a pair of horses from a Kṣatriya, sheep from a Vaiśya or a cow from any of these three.[13]

Lastly we may note the type of Brahmins eligible for receiving gifts. Numerous texts[14] say, a learned Brahmin living in one's neighbourhood should be preferred to one who is not near. If the donor knowingly overlooks the neighbouring Brahmin, he would incur sin. But no sin is incurred if a donor favoured a worthy Brahmin living far away to an ignorant and foolish Brahmin living next door. According to Vasiṣṭha,[15] a Brahmin is a *pātra*, in three respects, i.e. in respect of his parents and of his *guru*, whose means of subsistence are slender, who is tender

1. *Bau.* Śesasūtra. 1.4.10; Vai. Ś.S. 1.7.
2. *Agniveśya. G.S.* 3.5.1. p.140.
3. Ibid.
4. *Vaikh.Ś.S.* 14.9.14.
5. Ibid., *Kāt.Ś.S.* 14.9.14.
6. *Baudh.G.S.* 3,17.7.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. *Vaikh.G.S.* 1,15. *Āp.Ś.S.*, 5.6.20.7 says, a horse be given to Brahman and Adhvaryu.
10. *Kāt.Ś.S.* 14.4.14.
11. *Śāṅ.Ś.S.* 14.28.13.
12. *Pār.G.S.*1.8.15-17; *Śāṅ.G.S.* 1.14,13-15.
13. *Gaut.Dh.S.* V.42; *Āp.Dh.S.* 1.4.14,26-29.
14. *Bau.Dh.S.* 1.5.98.
    Also see *Vas.Dh.S.* 3,9-10.
15. *Vas.Dh.S.* 6,26.

hearted and who has his senses under restraint.

In the Dharma-sūtras caste considerations butt in even here. A gift made to a person of a higher caste brings more merit to a donor than one given to a person of a lower caste. In this connection Gautama[1] clearly states that a gift given to a Brahmin (though unlearned), to a *śrotriya* (for *ācārya*) and to one who has fully mastered all the Vedas (with their subsidiary lores), respectively confers merit which is twice, a hundred thousand times or an infinite number of times greater than merit accruing from a gift to a non-Brahmin. Gautama and Baudhāyana make it obligatory to give according to one's ability, outside the altar, a portion of one's wealth to a Brahmin, a *śrotriya* and a *Veda-pāraga* when they seek help for paying the *guru-dakṣiṇā*, for their own marriage, for treatment, for their own maintenance (that day), for a sacrifice, for their own study or for a journey. Even when a king has given away in *Viśvajit* sacrifice everything, he must give cooked food to all others who beg for it (except a Brahmin, a *Śrotṛiya* and a *Veda-pāraga*.[2]

OTHER OCCUPATIONS :

(*i*) *The Royal Purohita* : According to the Dharma-sūtras, the Brahmin had the exclusive right of becoming the royal priest (*Purohita*) of the king. Gautama[3] says that a king and a Brahmin deeply versed in the Vedas together uphold the moral order in the world. This looks like a reconciliation of the conflict between the Brahmins and Kṣatriyas for the welfare of all. Apparently harmony between two groups was a guarantee for all-round prosperity. Vasiṣṭha says, "If a Brahmin is appointed a *Purohita*, there is prosperity."[4] According to Gautama,[5] without the priest to guide the king, his kingdom

1. *Gau.Dh.S.* V.18.
2. *Bau.Dh.S.* 11.3.24,
   See also.*Gau.Dh.S.* V.19.20.
3. *Gau.Dh.S.* 8.1.
4. *Vas.Dh.S.* 19.4.
5. *Gau.Dh.S.* 11.4.

would come to distress. We also learn that the Brahmins united with the Kṣatriyas uphold the gods, manes and men.[1]

The king is asked to appoint as his *Purohita* one who is learned, is of noble family, handsome, middle-aged, eloquent, of good conduct and foremost in all sorts of transactions.[2] The king is required to abide by the instructions the latter may give.[3]

The *Purohita* seems to have had an important place in the group of royal advisers as he was connected with the king in many capacities, i.e. as the royal priest, as *guru*, as an adviser, as a minister (*amātya*), In Vedic polity he is always mentioned among the organs of the state.[4] In early Vedic times he had found a place among the *Ratnins* of the king and later on when Brahmanism spread, he became the most influential among the king's advisers.[5]

Both the Buddhist and Jaina texts show the *Purohita* as one of the most important persons in the state. The *Purohita* was appointed preferably from among the teachers, playmates, comrades, or class-mates of the king, so that he might be always trusted and relied upon both in the weal and woe.[6] The *Purohita* was always a Brahmin endowed with numerous virtues.[7] The priesthood was hereditary according to the Buddhist and Jaina sources. And so it was held by men of the same family for generations. We learn from the *Bandhanamokkha-Jātaka*[8] that the Boddhisatta was once born in the family of a royal chaplain and on his father's death had succeeded to the chaplaincy. But there were also exceptions to this rule. In certain cases a person would catch the king's eye and be appointed as his *Purohita*.[9] The story of the Sila *Jātaka*,[10] shows that in such appointments virtues were preferred to birth. A certain *Purohita* wanted to

1. Gau.Dh.S. 11.27.
2. Ibid. 11.12; *Bau.Dh.S.* 1.10.18.7.
3. Ibid. 11.13-14; 1.10.18.81.
4. Sharma (R.S.), *Aspect* op.cit., p.23.
5. Ibid. pp. 103-105.
6. Fausboll, J. I, No. 62, p. 289; II. No. 252; p. 282; No. 310, p.31.
7. Ibid. VI. No. 545. p. 255.
8. Ibid. *Bandhanamokkha Jātaka.* Vol. I, No. 120, p. 437.
9. Ibid. III, No. 412, p. 397.
10. Ibid. III, No. 362, pp. 362-63.

know if the honour he received was due to his noble birth or his virtues. For committing a bad deed, he could be deposed by the king. We are told that a priest should be a clever man, and should know all the omens. signs and dreams. He should possess the knowledge of interpreting the signs of the earth, air and the stars.[1] He would also bless the royal children at birth.[2] The *Purohita* was the teacher (*Ācariya*), the sacrificial priest and the house priest of the king.[3] The *Purohita* invoked the favour of the gods on behalf of the king,[4] sacrificed with the assistance of Brahmins to guard against the misfortune indicated by dream[5] and predicted the result of all undertakings under the influence of stars.[6] Numerous evidences supplied by the *Jātaka* sources indicate that the *Purohita* was the spiritual and temporal adviser of the king (*atthadhamm anuśāsaka*).[7] According to Fick,[8] this post was notdifferent from that of the *Purohita*. One of the *Jātakas* says, "The Brahmin *Purohita* of good conduct is designated *atthadhammanuśāsaka*.[9] But sometimes a priest would take an undue advantage of this position. In order to get some money[10] or to wreak vengeance[11] he would lead the king to a wrong path. In another *Jātaka* story, the priest of the king, being ambitious gave the king wrong advice and thus caused the death of many captive kings. Of course, the king soon got the reward of this cruel act and the priest could not save

1. Fausboll, I., VI. No. 546, p. 156-246.
2. Ibid. VI No. 542, p. 73.
3. Ibid. III No. 376, p. 154, Vol. I, 8 No. p. 29-30.
4. Law (B.C.), *India as Described in the Early texts of Buddhism and Jainism*, p. 156.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Fausball, J., II, No. 182, II. No. 157, pp. 21; 176; p. 51; 184 No. p. 67; 195 No. p, 88; No. 246, p. 183. See also Mehta (R.L.), *Pre-Buddhist India*, pp. 131-34.
8. Fick, op.cit, pp. 144-45; 174.
9. J.V. No. 515, p. 41, also No. VI, No. 542., p. 69.
   Sucarato nāma Brāhmaṇo Purohito Atthadhammānuśāsaka ahosi.
   (Fausboll, J.V. No. 515, p. 57).
10. Fausboll, *Mahā-supina, Jātaka*, J. Vol. I, No. 77, p. 187.
11. Ibid, *Kāka-Jātaka.*, Vol. I, No. 140, p. 300-5.

him.[1]

In the Jātakas the *Purohita* led the Brahmins in all the ceremonies. It is stated that the son of the *Purohita* was also brought up along with the prince and enjoyed the privileges owned by the prince.[2]

During the period, sacrifices had become a source of prosperity for the priests and the Brahmins. As the kings were in the habit of consulting them in case of bad omens or bad dreams, the *Purohita* would suggest to the king costly sacrifices to avert ill effect of those omens and dreams.[3]

The Jātaka stories also describe the *Purohita* as the foremost of the ministers (*amācca*) but they do not clearly state his function as a minister.[4]

In the Jaina texts[5] also the *Purohita* finds an important place in the king's assembly. He is enumerated among the most influential officers of administration and counted among the seven jewels.[6] In order to avert a misfortune of the king Ajātasattu, his *Purohita* Maheśvaradatta performed a sacrifice.[7]

(*ii*) *The Rulers* : Although the Sūtras give us no information, the nature of work they assign to the Brahmins indicates that they were excluded from this sphere. Of course they had a great deal of influence on the king as his royal priests. However, other sources do yield some information on this point. The *Saccainkira Jātaka*[8] refers to a Brahmin who was appointed as a king. At another place, it is stated that a deceased king's temporal and spiritual adviser, a Brahmin, was installed on the throne.[9] A certain Brahmin is said to have

1. Fausbol, Jātaka, Vol. III. No. 353, p. 105-107.
2. Ibid. J. Vol. IV., No. 313, p. 20-21; V. No. 529, p. 127, J.V. No. 529. It says that the son of the chaplain of Rājagaha had his education alongwith the prince.
3. Ibid. J. Vol. III, No. 314, p. 30-31.
4. Fausboll, J. II, p. 96 (*āmaccakula*), 127. (*panditāmacca*).
5. Jain (J.C.), op. cit.,
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Fausboll, J. I, No. 73, pp. 324-36.
   See Mohanlal Mehto Viyogi, *Jātaka Kālīna Bhāratīya Sanskriti*, p. 13.
9. Ibid. II, No. 247, p. 264.

instigated a revolt against a king, a former thief and after his death was installed by the people as their king.[1] Again a *Purohita*, who was loved by the queen mother, was made king by the king.[2] We may however, note that the Brahmins, referred to above, became kings under unusual circumstances; either due to a revolt or at the sudden death of an heir-less king. The Jātakas do not refer to any Brahmin family which ruled as a dynasty. While commenting on the Sūtra, 6.2.154 *Miśraṁ cānupasargamasandhau*), the Kāśikā[3] says : The word Sandhi here means a contract formed by reciprocal promises, 'If you do this thing for me, I will do this for you'. Others say, it means close proximity, without losing identity and thus differs from miśra in which two things are compounded into one. Therefore though the king and the Brahmin may be in close proximity as regards a territory (*deśāpratyāsattau*), they both retain their individuality; hence the counter example, *brāhmaṇa-misro rājā*. The word *Miśra*, therefore, points to joint authority between the king and his minister, who shared it together according to constitutional usage.[4] The agreement of a king with a Brahmin in accordance with the oath of loyalty to the constitution was a feature of Hindu polity.[5]

(*iii*) *The ministers* : The Brahmins are frequently mentioned among the *amāccas* and *mahāmattas* in the Jātakas.[6] They were rich and influential by virtue of office held by them. The smooth sailing of the vessel of administration largely depended on their honesty and efficiency.[7] In the rules of polity they were regarded as greatest diplomates and specialists.[8] In the *Mahāparinibbāṇasuttānta*, Sunidha and Vasakāra are referred to as the

1. Fausboll, J. III, No. 394, pp. 313-14.
2. Ibid, III, No. 411, p. 392.
   Here the author says that Jātakas do not know of any Brahmin kingdom and that all kings were Kṣatriyas. But this view in the light of above-mentioned evidences is untenable.
3. Agrawal (V.S.), op. cit., pp. 400-1.
4. Ibid,
5. Ibid., 401-2.
6. Fausboll, J. 1. No. 120, p. 120.
7. Law (B.C.), op. cit., *India*, p. 158.
8. Ibid.

two able Brahmin ministers of the king Ajātasattu, under whose supervision the village of Pāṭaligāma was fortified and which then developed into the city of Pāṭaliputra.[1] The *Vinaya Piṭaka* also refers to a Vasakāra as the chief-master of *Magadha* who used to inspect the official works at Rājagaha.[2]

The term *Ārya Brāhmaṇa* occurs in the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* of Pāṇini and denotes the king's chief counsellor.[3] The term Ārya-Brāhmaṇa (*Āryo Brāhmaṇakumārayoḥ*); honourable Brahmin, used by Pāṇini also denotes the chief-minister. In the very next sūtra he has referred to *Rājā ca* which as a Karmadhāraya compound, would apply to a king of the Brahmin *Varṇa*. The king's Brahmin was the same as king's minister mentioned in *Brāhmaṇamiśro rājā.*'[4]

THE FIGHTERS :

(*a*) *Commander-in-chief* : The post of the Commander-in-chief was also held by the Brahmins. *Jotipāla* son of the *Purohita* of the king of Benaras was appointed as the Commander-in-chief (*Senāpati*) on account of his great mastery and skill in archery. It is stated that he used to receive one thousand *Kahāpaṇas* as his pay which was increased to a hundred thousand after he had defeated five hundred archers in an open contest. He is also said to have received money amounting to eighteen hundred crores from the people of *Kāśī* offered to him in appreciation of his high proficiency in the use of arms.[5]

(*b*) *Soldiers* : There is no unanimity among the authors of the law-books on this point. Thus one of the Dharma-sūtras, forbids a Brahmin from taking to the profession of arms as a means of livelihood. It enjoins that a Brahmin should not catch hold of a weapon even for examining it.[6] But then Gautama takes a lenient view about this profession. It seems

1. Law (B.C.) op. cit., 'India,' p. 158.
2. *Vinaya Piṭakam*, Vol. I, II, I.4., p. 68.
3. Agarwala (V.S.), op. cit., p. 79.
4. Ibid., p. 402.
5. Fausboll, *Sarabhaṅga Jātaka*, V. No. 521, p. 127.
6. Āp. Dh.S. 1.10.29.7.

that he is not in favour of this occupation as a means of earning bread as he has allowed this (avocation) for a Brahmin only in the times of danger.[1] During such a period a Brahmin may possess a weapon for the sake of protection.[2] Baudhāyana agrees with Gautama and also lists a few more situations in which a Brahmin may wield weapons. It asserts[3], "that for the sake of protecting the lives of cows and Brahmins, for preventing the mixture of Varṇas, the Brahmins and Vaiśyas, he may take to arms. The Vasiṣṭha concurs with this. But when did the Brahmin get training in the use of arms? An answsr can be attempted as follows. Ancient Indian education included all sorts of trainings. The science of archery is referred to as one of the subjects of study.[4] And the Brahmin students could also have received training in archery. Moreover, the existence of the Brahmin teachers like Sudhanvā[5] and Droṇācārya[6] also confirms this view. The Jātakas[7] also refer to a Brahmin who had ultimately specialized in archery.

(*v*) *Other Councillors* : Besides the *Purohita*. the king had other councillors who advised him on different matters. Some among them could also have been Brahmins. We have just now seen that in the Sūtra period the Pariṣad was dominated by the Brahmins. There were also Brahmin-amātyas who helped the king.[8] The Mantrins also helped him. According to Prof. Kosambi "the very term mantrin means the possessor of magic formula which implies a Brahmin".[9]

(*a*) *The Judge* : The Brahmins also acted as judges in the absence of the king. The Dharma Sūtras show that in the administration of justice the Brahmins exercised dominant influence. Brahmin is mentioned by Gautama[10] as the king's

1. *Gaut. Dh.S.* VII.25.
2. Ibid.
3. *Baud. Dh.S.* II. 2.71.
4. Mookerji (R.K.), *Education*, op. cit., p. 482.
5. Ram. 2.100.14.
6. *Mahābhārata*, I. 58.8.
7. Mookerji (R.K.), *Education*, op. cit., p. 482.
8. Sharma (R.S.), *Aspects*, op. cit., p. 24.
9. Kosambi. J.B.B.R. A.S.N.S. XXII. 47.
10. *Gau. Dh.S.* 13.36.

substitute at judicial trials. He also asks a king to examine cases in the company of the Brahmins It is laid down that if (the evidence) is contradictory, the king shall learn (the truth) from (Brahmins), well-versed in the three-fold sacred lore, and give his decision (accordingly).[1] Āpastamba allows the *Purohita* the specific privilege of inflicting any penalty short of physical punishment and servitude on Brahmins who continue disregarding the duties of their castes. Dr. Ghoshal[2] rightly suggests that here we have the nearest approach to the church courts of mediaeval Europe In difficult and complicated cases the king took the advice of Brahmins who formed a Pariṣad. According to Gautama[3] this pariṣad or the assembly generally consisted of men well-versed in the Vedas. And the king awarded the sentence in accordance with the advice tendered by the *Pariṣad* The injuction[4] that in the presence of the assembly of gods or Brahmins or the king, the non-Brahmin witness should be asked to swear by truth proves that this *Pariṣad* consisted of Brahmins only. In this context Baudhāyana[5] records that a man well-versed in the four Vedas and Mīmāṁsā; a man well-versed in other auxiliary sciences (grrammar, Nirukta etc.), a man expert in religious matters and three Brahmins leading the worldly life form a *Pariṣad* which thus consists of ten such persons. We also read : Whatever Brahmins riding in the chariot of law, wielding the sword of the Veda, propounded even in jest, that is decided and declared to be the highest law.[7]

The Jātakas bear testimony to the fact that the royal priest

1. *Gau. Dh.S.* X. 25.
2. Ibid.
3. Ghoshal (U.N.) Loc. cit., I.H.Q. June. 1947, Vol. 23, Calcutta.
4. *Gaut. Dh.S.* 13.3.
5. Ibid. 13.13.
6. *Bau. Dh.S.* 1.1.1.8.
   It is suggested that the early pariṣad was a tribal military assembly, partly matriarchal and partly patriarchal. It has nothing to do with the king and Brahmins who come to dominate it in later times. In the Sūtra period it became a sort of legal assembly. See R.S. Sharma, *Aspects*, op. cit., p. 99-102.
7. *Bau. Dh.S.* 1.1.1.13.

also acted as a judge. Probably, the king appointed him to this post owing to his wisdom and good qualities[1] Some of the *Purohita* judges do not seem to have kept the high ideals of judiciary. They took bribes and gave wrong judgment. The Jātakas refer to a very interesting case[2] wherein a Brahmin judge took some bribe and gave a wrong judgment. The defeated man approached the viceroy who set things right. The king came to know of this act and dismissed the *Purohita* judge. In another case a *Purohita*-judge[3] is praised for reverting the whole judgment given by the *Senāpati*. According to R.L. Mehta,[4] Jayaswal's view[5] that the Brahmin-judge was a customary figure, is not borne out by facts.

(*vi*) *The Tiller and the trader* : Both the Brahmanical and non-Brahmanical works refer to agriculture as an occupation of the Brahmins. The law-books differ among themselves about this occupation. Baudhāyana[6] forbids a Brahmin from following this occupation because the study of the Vedas and devotion to agriculture are mutually exclusive and says that one with the capacity to look after both should give up agriculture. For those Brahmins who must take to agriculture, he recommends rather impracticable conditions.[7] Similarly, Vasiṣṭha allows this profession to the Brahmin but also asks him to water his beasts in the morning during summer. Gautama also says, 'agriculture and trade are also lawful for a Brahmin provided he does not do the work himself.'[8]

A Buddhist text refers to a Brahmin of *Bhāradvāja* clan (*Gotra*) who was a rich farmer.[9] The *Somadatta Jātaka* relates the story of a poor Brahmin farmer who himself ploughed his field and whose son was a *Paḍamulika* or menial in a royal

1. Fausboll, J. VI, No. 542, p. 131.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid, II, No. 220, pp. 186-96 (*Dhammaddhajajātaka*).
4. Mehta (R), op. cit., p. 131-34.
5. Jayaswal's, *Hindu Polity*, p. 153.
6. *Bau. Dh.S.* 1.5.101.
7. Ibid. 2.282-83.
8. *Gaut. Dh.S.* X. 5-6.
9. *Sutta Nirpāta, Bhāradvāja Sutta, Saṁ. Nik.* i. p. 171 f. Thomas (E.J.). *The life of Buddha*, p. 117.

court.[1] The Jātakas record other instances where the Brahmin farmers use the plough with their own hands.[2] Elsewhere[3] we read of a Brahmin who goes to the field along with his son and ploughs it, whilst the son destroys the weeds. At another place, a Brahmin peasant (*Kaesaka Brāhmaṇa*) unyokes his oxen after ploughing and works in his field with a spade.[4] The Jātakas also refer to wealthy farmers owning one thousand Karisas of lands.[5] Such wealthy Brahmins were called *Mahāsāla Brahmins*.[6]

We may therefore, conclude that the profession of agriculture seems to have been followed by the Brahmins, though certain restrictions were imposed upon them.

(*b*) *Trade* : Trade was also a legitimate occupation followed by the Brahmins in the time of distress. Of course, a number of restrictions and injunctions are prescribed by the law-books in this connection.[7] But this view is contested by another *Dharma Sūtra*,[8] whereby 'Trade is not a lawful avocation for a Brahmin."

Some Jātaka stories show Brahmins both as peddlers[9] and as merchants.[10] A certain wealthy Brahmin of the *Mahāsuta Soma-Jātaka* used to carry on trade between Eastern and Western India, transporting his goods in five hundred wagons.[11] Some of them owned a treasure of eighty crores.[12]

Even if a Brahmin happened to follow this avocation i.e. trade, he was not free to sell and barter any thing he liked. There were restrictions on the sale and barter of a number of things, such as perfumes, condiments, prepared food, sesame, milk and its products, roots, flowers, fruits, herbs (used as

1. Fausboll. *Jātaka*, II, No. 211, p. 165.
2. Fausboll III, No. 354, p. 162, IV. No. 484, p. 276.
3. *Uraga Jātaka*, Jātaka III, No. 359, p. 163.
4. *Jātaka* V. No. 516, p. 68.
5. *Jātaka* III, No. 389, p. 293; IV, No. 484, p. 276.
6. Ibid I. No. 10, p. 140; II No. 251, p. 272; IV. No. 480, pp. 237; No. 490, p. 325, V. No. 526, p. 193; No. 528, p. 227; VI. No. 539, p. 32.
7. *Gaut. Dh.S.* X. 5-6.
8. *Āp. Dh.S.* 1.7.20.10.
9. J. II. No. 155, p. 15.
10. J. IV. No. 422, p. 15; V. No. 513, p. 22; No. 537, p. 471 (R.L.M.).
11. J. V. No. 537, p. 471.
12. J. III No. 313, p. 39-43.

drugs), honey, meat, grass, water, deleterious drugs like opium and poison) cattle (for meat) men (as slaves), barren cows, heifers and cows liable to abortion.[1] According to Gautama a Brahmin should not sell land, rice, yava, goats, sheep, horses, bulls, freshly delivered cows and oxen that are yoked to carts.[2] This implies permission to trade in above-mentioned articles (land, rice etc.). Āpastamba[3] adds to the list of forbidden articles, weapons, stickly things (*śleṣma*), young stalk (*tokma*) fermented liquids (*Kiṇva*), the expectation of merits (*sukṛtāśā*) and rice; these are, on no account, to be sold Baudhāyana[4] is so much against the selling of rice and sesame that he says: 'He who sells them sells respectively his *pitṛs* and his prāṇas''. This condemnation seems, to be due to the close connection between sesame and the *Śrāddha* and *tarpaṇa*[5] ceremonies. Vasiṣṭha,[6] on the other hand, prohibits the selling of stones, salt, silk, iron, tin, lead, all wild animals, all tame animals with undown hoofs and those that have a means, birds, and animals having fangs. Further, a Brahmin selling meat lac and salt immediately incurs sin and becomes a Śūdra by selling milk for three days.[7] Although both proclaim the sin involved in a Brahmin selling sesame, Vasiṣṭha[8] appears to allow the sale of sesame to an actual grower, if it is for the purpose of religion.

Among objects which may be sold by a Brahmin trader are grass and wood in their natural state, domestic animals that have only one row of teeth, minerals except salt and thread (i.e. cloth) that are not coloured with some dye.[9] The selling of the minerals as permitted by Baudhāyana contradicts Vasiṣṭha who forbids their sale.[10] Āpastamba[11] states the general rule that even the exchange and barter of prohibited articles

1. *Gau. Dh.S.* VII. 8-14.
2. Ibid. VII. 15.
3. *Āp. Dh.S.* I.7.20.12-13.
4. *Bau. Dh.S.* II. 1.77-78.
5. Kane (P.V.), op. cit., Vol. II, pt. I, p. 127.
6. *Vas. Dh.S.* II, 24-29.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid. II, 31.
9. *Bau. Dh.S.* II. 1.81-82.
10. *Vas. Dh.S.* II. 24-29.
11. *Āp. Dh.S.* I.7.20,14-15.

cannot be resorted to, but adds that barter is allowed of food with food, of slaves with slaves, of fragrant things with other fragrant things and of one kind of learning with another. Gautama[1] allows the mutual exchange in equal measure or quantity of *rasas*, domestic animals, cooked food, and uncooked food for immediate use, but prohibits the barter of salt, cooked food and sesame with other articles. Vasiṣṭha[2] agrees with Āpastamba in the matters of exchange and barter.

Thus the list of articles for trade differs from one law book to another. From these differences N. K. Dutt[3] concludes that in the times of the Sūtras, occupations were no longer the basis of castes and that there was no flexibility in the caste-system. Legislation became necessary to prevent any indiscriminate intermingling of Brahmin and other castes in non-Brahmanical professions and consequent effacement of the marks which distinguished one caste from another.[4]

(*x*) *Money-lender* : Just as he grants conditional approval to agriculture and trade (if not personally conducted), Gautama[5] also consents to usury, if it is not personally conducted. Āpastamba[6] totally disapproves of the idea.

Unlike the conditional approval of agriculture and trade[7] Āpastamba totally disapproves of usury and prescribes an expiation for a Brahmin engaged in usury.[8]

According to Kane, the main idea of condemning such an avocation was to make the Brahmins live simple lives and to fix their mind on the study of the Vedas, etc.[9] By taking up such low avocations, the cause of education would have suffered, as the Brahmin so engaged would have thought in terms of money. They were made to feel "that a highly spiritual life should not be given up for mere secular life, to prevent the

1. *Gaut. Dh.S.*, VII, 16-21.
2. Vas. Dh. S., II, 37-39.
3. Dutt (N.K.), op. cit., p. 146.
4. Ibid.; p. 146.
5. *Gau. Dh. S.* X. 5-6.
6. Āp. Dh. S. I. 9.27-10.
7. Ibid.
8. Āp. Dh. S. I. 9,27-10.
9. Kane (P.V.), op. cit., Vol. II, pt. I, p.124.

coarsing and hardening of the heart and emotion in a relentless and continuous pursuit of wealth or mortal glory."[1]

Miscellaneous : In addition to the occupations enumerated above, we find many of them engaged in various other trades and professions. As these latter were not approved of, the status of the Brahmins so engaged was not high.[2] Thus at one place, the Baudhāyana[3] asks a king to treat those Brahmins as Śūdras who engage in rearing cattle, in selling commodities and those who are artisans and actors, who are mere servants and money-lenders. Further, "Those Brahmins who go astray and so do not perform the morning and evening adoration and who devote themselves to the works appropriate for the Śūdras, are as good as Śūdras", declares the same text[4] at another place. The Vasiṣṭha also echoes the same when it lays down that Brahmins who are not *Śrotriyas*, who do not teach the Veda and who do not kindle the sacred fire are reduced, while still living, to the status of a Śūdra along with their families.[5] It supports this statement by citing verse found in the Manusmṛti.[6] From such references scattered throughout the Dharma Sūtras, one can say that the Brahmins tried to avoid occupations other than those that were prescribed for them.

These fallen Brahmins were not only condemned by Brahmanical works but were equally looked down upon by the Buddhists and Jaina writers. Thus the 'Brahmajāla Sutta' of the *Dīgha Nikāya*[7] recording the activities of the degenerated Brahmins says they were addicted to visiting shows, such as dance, singing of songs, instrumental music, shows at fairs, etc., They were addicted to games and recreation, to the use of means for adorning and beautifying themselves. A long list of similar avocations is given by the Dīgha Nikāya and this includes : palmistry, divining (by means of omens) and by signs, auguries drawn from celestial phenomena, prognostication

1. Kane (P.V.), op. cit.. Vol. II, pt. I. p. 124.
2. Chaudhry (R.K.), op.cit., p. 46.
3. *Bau.Dh.S.* 1.5.95.
4. *Bau.Dh.S.* II.3.20.
5. *Vas.Dh.S.* III.1-2.
6. Manu, II.168.
7. Digha. N. (*Brahmajāla Sūtta*), I.1.2.8.; pp. 6-15.

through interpretation of dreams, fortune-telling, auguries drawn from marks on the clothes, sacrificing to Agni, offering oblations to various gods, determining lucky sites, repeating charms, laying ghosts, snakecharming, use of similar arts on other beasts and birds, astrology, astronomy, the power of prophecy, incantations, oracles, consulting gods through a girl possessed or by means of mirror, worshipping the great one, invoking *Śrī* (goddess of luck), keeping vows to gods (*sānti-kammāṇi*), muttering charms to cause virility or impotence, consecrating sites, advising on customary laws, laying demons in a cemetery, laying ghosts, the poison-craft, the scorpion-craft, the mouse-craft, the crow-craft, the bird-craft, giving charms to ward off arrows, the animal wheel and more of the same kind.[1] Brahmins were also addicted to taking messages, going on errands and acting as go-betweens, and to the service of the kings and ministers and also to the serving of the Kṣatriyas, Brahmins etc.[2] They were tricksters (*Kuhakā*), droners out (of holy words of pay) (lapakā); diviners (*nemittakā*), interpreters of signs and omens) and exorcists (*nippesikā*).[3] The Dāsa-Brāhmaṇa Jātaka[4] mentions ten classes of Brahmins e.g. those who went about as physicians (*tikicchakasamā*) with sacks containing sanctified medicinal roots and herbs; those who like servants (*paricārakasamā*) worked as messengers or wagon drivers; those who in the garb of ascetics behaved like tax collectors (*niggāhakasamā*); those who begged in the garb of ascetics looking like diggers of the soil for uprooting stumps (*khāṇughātasamā*); those who looked like traders (*vāṇijakasamā*) and used to sell fruits,timber, sweets, scents, honey and ointment; those who like the Ambaṭṭhas and *Vassas* carried on agriculture and farming, acted as match-makers or gave away their daughters for money,

1. D.N. 1.2.21-27. pp. 10-12.
2. Ibid. 1.2.9., p.6.
3. Ibid. 1.2.20. pp. 9-10.
4. Francis (H.T.) and Neil (R.A.); *The Jātaka* (No. 495), Vol. IV, p. 228. Rhys Davids, *Buddhist India*, p.33.
   The author points out that these occupations suggest that "there was altogether a much freer possibility of change among the social ranks than is usually suposed."

those who acted as butchers, (go-ghātaka), castrated or branded animals or interpreted omens; those who acted like goat keepers and *niṣādas* guarding the business quarters or looking to the safety of caravans; those who in the garb of the ascetics behaved like hunters (*hiddakasamā*), killing cats, lizards, hares, fish and tortoises and those *yājñikas* who assisted as bath-assistants (*malamajjanasamā*) while performing the soma-yāga.

The Jaina texts also refer to dream-reading and fortune-telling among the avocations followed by Brahmins.[1] It was perhaps, a custom to predict the future of the king's new-born child by the Brahmins, well-versed in this knowledge. The interpreters of the dreams and knowers of eight divisions of *Mahānimitta* predicted the future of lord Mahāvīra when called in by his father Siddhārtha.[2] People used to enquire about the auspiciousness of the days on which a journey was to be undertaken and the Brahmins used to utter benediction praying for the safe journey.[3] Magic, demon-worship and medicine, were the avocations adhered to by the Brahmins.[4]

It is thus quite evident that these occupations were followed by them for the sake of money. It was, perhaps, the time when performing of the sacrifices was on the decline because they recovered great amount for their performance and also when Buddhism was engaged in pointing to the people the futility of the sacrifices performed with great pomp and show; some of the Brahmins had no other course but to follow such low occupations.

SOCIAL POSITION :

(*i*) *Brahmin as the expounder of duties* : The sacred law-books entrusted Brahmins with the duty of expounding the duties of the three lower *Varṇas*. He was asked to show them the right means of livelihood and the right conduct. Further

1. Jain (J.C.), op. cit., pp. 142-43.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.

the king and the people were expected to abide by his directions.[1] Thus authority was split into two parts, it was the Brahmins who propounded the *Dharma*, while the Kṣatriyas ruled in accordance with the *Dharma*, as laid down in the śāstras.[2]

(*ii*) *Brahmin and auspiciousness* : Besides, the presence of the Brahmin was considered auspicious at various ceremonies. Thus his presence was very much desired at the *Puṁsavana* ceremony.[3] The company of a Brahmin woman at a marriage was considered auspicious for the bride.[4] It is also said that an initiated child should see the Brahmin, the cow etc.[5] A person defiled by speaking to a despised man was purified by meditation and by taking to a Brahmin.[6] The house of a Brahmin was considered auspicious for a bride and her bride-groom.[7]

(*iii*) *Respect for the learned Brahmins* : Although Brahmins as such were highly respected in society, it was, however, the learned section of the Brahmins, that commanded a higher degree of respect in society. The Pāraskara lays down the rule that a person going in chariot should descend therefrom when approaching a Brahmin[8]. However a Brahmin devoid of Vedic learning was considered to be existing in name only like a wooden elephant and a deer of skin.[9] On the other hand, it is said that the words of the learned *dvijas* should be considered to be the highest Dharma, even if uttered in jest.[10] According to Vasiṣṭha[11] one should offer food to a learned (Brahmin) even though he be living far off and not to a fool living by the house. No sin is incurred by ignoring a stupid Brahmin. The *Baudhāyana* says, "There is no transgression of a Brahmin in case he is stupid and possesses no knowledge of the Veda be-

1. *Vas.Dh.S.* 1.39-41.
2. Kane, op. cit.f Vol. II, pt. I; p. 139.
3. *Go.G.S.* 3.6.8, 2.7.12.
4. Ibid. 2.4.6-9.
5. Ibid. III. 2.34; II. 10.41-42.
6. *Gau Dh.S.* 9.17-19; *Gau.Dh.S. Pariśiṣṭha* 2.18.6-7.
7. *Go G.S.* 2.3.1.
8. *Pār.G.S.* III.14.8.
9. *Bau.Dh.S.* 1.1.11.
10. Ibid. 1.1.12.
11. *Vas.Dh.S.* 3.9.

cause no one offers oblations in ashes and gives up a burning fire."[1] Vasiṣṭha seems to have an illiterate person in mind when it says that if some non-learned person accepts a cow or gold or clothes or house, or land, sesamum, he will be reduced to ashes like a log of wood.[2]

Soma is said to be the king of the Brahmins.[3] And the Brahmins were considered as the twenty-eight constellation.[4] It is also declared that he who performed a sacrifice having appointed a learned Brahmin for the task prospers (through the sacrifice).[5] It was also thought that the Brahmins, who were peaceful, self-restrained, well-versed in Vedic lore, conquerors of senses, not addicted to the killing of human beings and extended their hands with hesitation in accepting gifts, were able to help in crossing the ocean of this world.[6]

The Buddhist canons[7] and the Jaina texts[8] bear testimony to the fact that they were respectfully treated by all and sundry. The Jātakas also declare that the Brahmins were accorded proper respect by the kings.[9]

(*iv*) *Decent behaviour in the presence of a Brahmin* : A Snātaka is expected to behave decenty in the presence of a Brahmin. Thus it is enjoined, "Facing wind, fire, Brahmins, the sun, water, the images of gods (*devatā*) and cows, he should not eject urine or faeces or other impurities.[10] People are also asked not to cross between the fire and the Brahmin.[11]

1. *Bau.Dh.S.* 1,5,10.28.
2. Vas.Dh.S.6.32.
3. *Satyā.* 4.10.
4. Ibid.
5. *Bau.G.S.* 1.3.5.
6. *Vas.Dh.S.* 6.25.
7. The grant of villages etc. to the learned Brahmins like *Cāṅki* and others by the king Pasenādi was in appreciation of their great learning (See under state support).
8. Jain (J.C.) : op. cit., pp. 141-42. The learned author has observed that not only the kings but other peoples also gave away charity and paid reverence to the Brahmins....."
9. Francis (H.T.), *The Jātaka* Vol. V. (No. 537), p. 253; Vol. III. (No. 323) pp. 52-5.
10. *Vas.Dh.S.* 6.11. Gau. 9.12.
11. Ibid. 12.28.

He should not pass between two Brahmins.[1] He should not touch with his foot a Brahmin or cow, nor any other (venerable being).[2] He should not stretch his feet towards the fire, the sun, the water, the Brahmin, the cow and the deity in order to show his strength.[3] No person should enter the cremation ground, a temple or a room where Brahmins sit, without washing his feet with water.[4] In the fire chamber amidst the cows, in proximity of Brahmins one should raise his right arm.

(*v*) *Brahmin on the road* : The Dharma-Sūtras recommend respectful behaviour towards the Brahmins even on the road. According to Gautama[5] if there was a crowd on the road or any other obstruction, precedence was to be given to the cartman, to an old man, to one suffering from a disease, to a woman, to a Snātaka, to the king; but a king was to give precedence to a Śrotriya. Āpastamba[6] also states that if the Brahmin and the king both are on the road, then the path belongs to the Brahmin. Having said this it makes a general rule whereby a person of lower-*varṇa* should give way to men of higher *varṇa*.[7] This shows the exalted position of Brahmins in the Pre-Mauryan Age.

(*vi*) *Brahmin as a guest* : The honouring of the guest (*Atithi*) was a time-honoured custom in ancient India. This act brought the person prosperity. The non-honouring of all guests, (*Atithi*) was regarded as a great sin which destroyed one's accumulated merit. Once on returning home, Yama learnt that one, Naciketa had been waiting at his house for three nights without food. He said to his visitor, "The Brahmin who dwells in a house fasting destroys that foolish householder's hopes and expectations, the reward of his intercourse with pious people, the merit of his soft speech, the good results of his sacrifices and beneficial deeds and his cattle and children as well".[8] The Sūtras

1. *Vas.Dh.S.*. 12.30.
2. *Āp.Dh.S.* 1.10.30.25.
3. Ibid. 1.11.31.6.
4. *Bau.Dh.S.* 2.5.2.
5. *Gau.Dh.S.* 6.21-22.
9. *Āp.Dh.S.* 2.5.11.5.
7. Ibid. 2.5.11.6.
8. *Kāṭha. Up.* 1.1.8.

frequently refer to this custom. Gautama defines a guest thus, "a guest is one who,belonging to a different village and intending to stay for a night only, arrives at a time when the rays of the sun pass over the trees i.e. in the evening".[1] But according to Vasiṣṭha a Brahmin who stays for one night is a guest (*Atithi*) because he does not stick to one place, therefore, he is called a guest (*atithi*).[2] *Vasiṣṭha* declares, "If a Brahmin, desirous of staying comes at the house of a man and stays there without food, he takes away all—whatever merit the householder may have attained by doing good actions".[3] The Baudhāyana states that if a Brahmin along with a Kṣatriya comes at the house of a man, the Brahmin alone is considered a guest and not the Kṣatriya.[4]

The guests were treated with the same respect in the times of the Jātakas. A Jātaka tale relates that a Bodhisatta, who was born in a Brahmin family, once went to the house of a merchant for alms. But no body paid attention to him. As he was turning away the merchant came and saluted him and begged pardon of him for not attending to him. While washing his feet and serving him with rice-cakes, etc. he said to him, "Revered Sir, a stranger who came to our doors whether he was a beggar or a holy priest or a Brahmin, had never before gone away without receiving marks of honour and respect".[5]

The ritual of offering the *argha* is connected with the rite of hospitality. According to the sūtras six persons are worthy of *argha*. That is, an officiating priest at a Vedic sacrifice, an *ācārya*, a *snātaka*,a king who had received the royal consecration, a dear friend and a *śrotriya*.[6] But Pāraskara lays down a rule

1. *Gaut.Dh.S.* V. 41; *Vas.Dh.S.* 8.4-5.
2. *Vas Dh.S.* 8.7.
3. Ibid.; See also Śāṅ.G.S. 2.17.1., which says : 'Even if a man constantly gathers barhi and performs the *Agnihotra*, a Brahmin who stays (in his house) without receiving honour takes away all his good deeds."
4. *Bau.G.S.* 2.5.1.
   It is implied here that the Kṣatriya could accept food and shelter in the house of some lower-caste householder.
5. *Jātaka*, Vol. III, No. 337, *Pīṭha Jātka*, pp. 78-80.
6. *Jai.G.S.* 1.19; *Varāha G.S.* 12.1-3; *Āp.Dh.S.* 2.4.8.6-7; *Pār.G.S.* 1.3.1-3, *Go.G.S.* 40.10.23; *Āp.G.S.* 5.13.19; *Bāu.G.S.* 2.5.16.

that all of them should be accorded this reception if they visit once a year with the exception of the officiating priest, who is to be honoured whenever the Yajamāna intends to perform a sacrifice.[1] The host washes the feet of the guest. If the host is a Brahmin then he washes the right foot of the guest and if he is a Śūdra then the left foot.[2] The law-books are silent about Kṣatriyas and Vaiśya hosts. As there is no injunction forbidding the Brahmin from becoming the guest of a Śūdra, we take it that a Brahmin could be his guest as well. Some Sūtra texts also say that a Śūdra could be the guest of a Brahmin. The Āpastamba and the Baudhāyana hold that if a Śūdra comes as a guest to a Brahmin, he should be given some work to do and may be fed after the work had been performed.[3] He should not be fed and received by the Brahmins, but by his slaves, who should fetch rice from the royal stores for this purpose.[4] According to Gautama, a non-Brahmin should not be the guest of a Brahmin, except on the occasion of a sacrifice, when Vaiśyas and Śūdras should be fed along with the servants just for compassion sake.[5]

(*vii*) *Commensality* : The Dharma Sūtras do not lay down restrictions on the intermixing of the three higher *Varṇas* at feasts or meals.[6] This gives the impression as pointed out by Prof. R.S. Sharma that the ideal Brahmin avoided the food of a Śūdra, especially if he was impure.[7] In the *Vaiśvadeva* ceremony a Śūdra could be employed for preparing food under the supervision of a person out of the three *Varṇas*.[8] The *Śrāddha* ceremony is enough to prove that the Brahmin ate food prepared in the house of any *dvija*. Gautama lays down that a Brahmin may eat food given by a *dvija*, commended for the faithful performance of

1. *Pār.G.S.* 1.3.1-3, *Āp.Dh.S.* 2.3.9.7.; *Āp.G.S.* 5.13.19.
2. *Pār.G.S.* 1.3.9-11., *Āp.G.S.* 5.13.5; *Hir.G.S.* 1.4.12,19.
3. *Āp.Dh.S.* II.2.4.19; *Bau.Dh.S.* II. 3.5.14.
4. Ibid. II.2.4.20.
5. *Gaut. Dh.S.* V. 43.
6. Ramgopal, op. cit., p. 122.
7. Sharma (R.S.), *Śūdras*, op. cit., p. 115.
8. Ibid.

duties.[1] The Baudhāyana says that Brahmins should be served with *apūpas*, *dhānas* (parched grains), *odana* and *saktus* at the *Upākarman* ceremony.[2]

The Buddhist works give but a very few hints regarding the customs of eating or non-eating together. Elsewhere in a Jātaka story a Brahmin is described as eating food from the hand of a *Cāṇḍāla* and repenting for doing so [3] It is quite clear from such sto ies that the food of *cāṇḍāla* was considered impure by the Jātakas, and that it was forbidden to the Brahmins. In another Jātaka we are told that Brahmins were outcast by their brother Brahmins, for drinking water mixed with rice water, a *cāṇḍāla* had used.[4]

The Dharma Sūtras lay down that the food touched by a Śūdra becomes impure and is therefore unfit for eating[5] but if the same food is touched by an impure Brahmin or by a person of a higher Varṇa it does not become unfit for eating.[6] According to another maxim, if a Śūdra touches a Brahmin while he is eating, he should leave off eating because his touch lends him impurity.[7] The Sūtras unanimously lay down that a Brahmin must avoid the food given by a Śūdra.[8] Āpastamba however allows a Brahmin to accept the food from a Śūdra only in the time of distress if it is purified by gold and fire but asks him to abandon it when an alternative source of livelihood is found.[9] Gautama is liberal in allowing him to accept it without any condition in time of distress.[10] This Dharma sūtra asks a Snātaka to shun sipping the water from the hands of a Śūdra.[11] According to Vasiṣṭha the most deserving Brahmin was one whose stomach did not contain the food of a Śūdra.[12] It implies that

1. *Gau. Dh.S.* XVII, 1.
2. *Bau. G.S.* 3.1.11.
3. *Bau. G.S.* 2.82.
4. Fausboll, J., 4.388.
5. *Āp.* I. 5.16.22.
6. Ibid. I. 6.16.21.
7. Ibid. I. 5.16.30.
8. *Āp. Dh.S.* II. 8.18.2; *Bau. Dh.S.* II. 2.3.1; *Vas. Dh.S.* XIV. 2-4.
9. Ibid. I. 6.18.14-15.
10. *Gau. Dh.S.* XVII.5.
11. Ibid. IX. 11.
12. *Vas. Dh.S.* VI. 26.

a Brahmin who accepts the food of a Śūdra should not be given sacrificial gifts which were the main source of livelihood.[1] The same authority declares that a Brahmin, who dies with the food of a Śūdra in his stomach, will be born as a village pig or in the family of that very Śūdra.[2] Such a person will not get salvation even if he recited the Vedas everyday.[3] If such a Brahmin has a conjugal intercourse with a Śūdrā woman the sons born of such a union will be Śūdras.[4] The performance of seven *Prāṇāyāmas* daily for a week could expiate the sin incurred by eating the food or by cohabiting with a Śūdra female.[5] Or he may take boiled barley grain to expiate the sin so incurred.[6]

(*viii*) *Duty of the State to maintain the Brahmins* : Not only were the Brahmins exempted from taxes, they were also supported and sustained by the state. Gautama[7] includes the *Śrotriyas*, who are Brahmins, among persons who are to be supported by the king. It further states that the Brahmin student, who has forcibly taken articles needed for a specified purpose from a Śūdra and other irreligious persons, shall confess his guilt when produced before the king, who shall maintain him thereafter if he is a man of learning and character.[8] Vasiṣṭha says that no Brahmin or any person engaged in pious works shall be allowed by the king to suffer from hunger in his kingdom.[9] Elsewhere a king is asked to give his wealth or the land which is left uncultivated to the deserving or worthy Brahmins. He who does so attains higher worlds.[10] Gautama declares that it is the duty of a king to support such Brahmins, who are unable to sustain themselves (on account of

1. Sharma (R.S.), op. cit.,, p. 114.
2. *Vas. Dh.S.* VI. 27-29.
3. Ibid. VI. 28-29.
4. Ibid.
5. *Bau. Dh.S.* IV. 1.5.
6. Ibid.
7. *Gaut. Dh.S.* X. 9.
8. Ibid. 18.30-31.
9. *Vas. Dh.S.* 3.79-80.
10. *Satyā.* 27.5.196.

some disease etc.).[1]

The Buddhist canonical works also refer to some Brahmins[2] who were leading an aristocratic life by the support of grants issued by their kings. Cāṅki was one such Brahmin who had a grant from the king Pasenādi of Kosala.[3] A king of Aṅga is said to have given in alms[4] five hundred *Kahāpaṇas* to a learned Brahmin.

THE BRAHMIN AND LAW :

(*i*) *Inviolability of person* : The king was the ruler of all, except Brahmins.[5] According to Gautama the king should exempt the Brahmins in six matters, i.e. he should not be beaten (whipped), he should not be fattered, he should not be punished with fines of money, he should not be banished, censured or abandoned. The penalties prescribed by Gautama for Brahmins are as under : public exposure (*Vikhyāpana*), banishment (*Vivāsana*) and branding (*aṅkana*).[6] Baudhāyana[7] is, however, more explicit. He exempts the Brahmin from corporal punishment but prescribes various forms of branding such as branding on the forehead with red hot iron, and banishment for great sins. viz., murder, incest, drinking and theft of gold. Elsewhere[8] he mentions Brahmins in the list of persons against whom the king should not proceed unless they are *ātatāyin*. The killing of a non-*ātatāyi* Brahmin was considered the greatest sin. The Chāndogya Upaniṣad[9] counts the murder of a Brahmin among one of the five great sins (*mahāpātakas*). Vasiṣṭha[10] enumerates Brahmin's murder among the five *mahāpā-*

1. *Gaut. Dh.S.* (2.1.9). X. 10.
2. *D.N.* Vol. I. 3.8.30, p. 90, It states that Pokkharasādi received a grant of village from Pasenadi. The same king is said to have granted a village to Lohicca, a Brahmin for subsistence (D.N. XII. p. 191).
3. *Majj. N.* II. 45.1.1., p. 427, *D.N.* I. 13.1.2, p. 199.
4. Ibid. II. 44.2.10.. p. 426.
5. *Gaut. Dh.S.* XI. 1.
6. Ibid. VIII. 12-13; XII. 43.
7. *Bau. Dh.S.* 1.10.18.17-18.
8. Ibid. 1.10.18.11-12.
9. *Ch. Up.* 5.10.9.
10. *Vas.* 5.35.1.

takas while Gautma[1] places the Brahmin's killer at the head of the *patitas* (persons guilty of great sins). *Vasiṣṭha*[2] says, "By killing an *ātatāyin*, they say, the killer incurs no sin whatsover", and quotes three verses: an incendiary, a prisoner, one armed with a weapon, a robber, one who wrests a field or carries away one's wife—these six are called *ātatāyinaḥ*. When an *ātatāyin* comes to attack with the desire to kill (or harm), one may kill him even though he may be a master of the Veda by doing so one does not incur the sin of a Brahmin-murderer. If a person kills one who has studied the Vedas and who is born of good family because the latter is an *ātatāyin* he thereby does not become a Brahmin-murderer as in that case fury meets fury".

At another place Baudhāyana[3] points out that a person other than a Brahmin shall suffer corporal punishment (*śārīro daṇḍaḥ*) for adultery. Gautama reserves the severest punishment for the killer of a Brahmin (*Bhrūṇahā* or *brahmahā*). It further believes that there is no expiation for this crime. But in the same breath Gautama[4] mentions a list of penances of atrocious severity for the murderer of a Brahmin (man or woman), ar d for destroying the embryo of a Brahmin. Even the very look of such a man spoils the food which should not be eaten by a Brahmin.[5] Death and confiscation of property are prescribed for him who murders the Brahmin.[6] In case a learned Brahmin is killed unintentionally by a person belonging to one of the three lower *Varṇas* the killer could be purified by means of penance.[7]There is no expiation for such a wilful murder though a number of penances are set out.[8] According to Āpastamba[9] an *abhiśastā* i.e. the slayer of the man of first two *Varṇas* who have studied the Vedas or have been initiated for soma-sacrifiee, should take to twelve year's penance of severe

1. *Gaut. Dh.S.* 21.1.
2. *Vas. Dh.S.* 3.15-18. *Bau. Dh.S.* I. 10.14.
3. *Bau. Dh.S.* 2.2.4.1.
4. *Gau. Dh.S.* 20.1 and 21.1.
5. Ibid. 22.2.
6. Ibid. 27.11.
7. *Bau. Dh.S.* 1.10.18.19.
8. Ibid. 2.1.1.2.
9. *Āp.Dh.S.* 1.9.24.6.

austerities in the forest. But if the person slain is a *śrotriya* who has finished the Soma ceremonies, the murderer must observe this penance until his last breath, instead of twelve yeart because he cannot be purified in this life but can only hope in the next one.[1] Another way of expiating the sin incurred by slaying a Brahmin was to seek death in battle or else to throw oneself into fire after cutting off one's limbs and presenting them as offerings to the fire.[2]

It has been pointed out that the Brahmins enjoyed certain immunities like their counterparts, the clergy, in the mediaeval Europe. But there seems to be an obvious difference between a person guilty of an offence against a Brahmin and that against a member of the clergy. The former was tried in the ordinary courts while the later was tried in special ecclesiastical courts of their own.[3] The former's courts had Brahmins as judges whereas the ecclesiastical courts could have clergies as judges.[4]

Even for threatening[5] a Brahmin (*abhikrnddhavāgoraṇa*) for striking him (*nighāta*) and for drawing blood during the act of striking, the offender is severely condemned by the Śūtra works. Thus Gautama[6] says that the striker is barred from heaven for a hundred years, a hundred thousand years, and for as many years as the dust particles which the split blood binds together. The actual penance for this act is laid down by the Baudhāyanaśs..[7] It says that he who has raised a hand against a Brahmin shall perform *Kṛcchra* and *Atikṛcchra* penance, if he merely strikes, a *kṛcchra* and *cāndrāyaṇa* if blood flows. According to *Āpastamba*[8] Brahmin the offender should be made to perform penance under the supervision of teachers and other Brahmins well versed in the Śāstras, and if he does not abide by them, then he should be taken to the king who should place him under the

1. *Āp. Dh.S.* 1.9.24.6.
2. Ibid. 1.9.25.11-12.
3. Kane, op. cit., Vol. II, pt. I., p. 143.
4. Ibid.
5. *Gau. Dh.S.* 22.20-22.
6. Ibid.
7. *Bau. Dh.S.* 2.1.1.7.
8. *Āp. Dh.S.* 2.5.10.14-18.

custody of his *Purohita*. The *Purohita* should prescribe penances and if he still does not carry them out then he should be punished for indiscipline. But it says that the *Purohita* should not prescribe corporeal punishment or slavery for him.

(*ii*) *Inviolability of property* : In both Vasiṣṭha and Baudhāyana the rule of inviolability of the Brahmin's property is based on the authority of the Vedic text[1] which declares that the property of a Brahmin is more poisonous because poison kills only one while it [property] kills him who takes it together with his sons and grandsons. According to Vasiṣṭha[2] and others the property of a Brahmin dying heirless escheats to the king who distributes it among the *śrotriyas* or other Brahmins while in the case of others the property goes to the state treasury. Baudhāyana[3] declares that in no circumstances shall the king take the wealth of a Brahmin. The wealth (*dravya*) of the *Śrotriya* is expressly exempted by *Vasiṣṭha*[4] from the operation of the rule declaring ten years, adverse possession to deprive the owner of his title. The immunities of the Brahmin's property are described by Baudhāyana.[5] Here the king is permitted to take away the property of a non-Brahmin when the owner has disappeared after guarding it for full one year. The stealing of any one's property was considered a very serious offence but the theft of a Brahmin's gold was ranked among the great sins (*mahāpātaka*).[6] Baudhāyana[7] on the other hand, includes the theft of a Brahmin's property (*brahmasva*) in the list of acts causing loss of the Varṇa (*pātanīyāni*). In agreement with the above, Āpastamba[8] declares that a Brahmin, a Rājanya and a Vaiśya, condemned on account of stealing will be born after death as *cāṇḍāla* Brahmin, *Pulkasa* Rājanya and *Vaiṇa* Vaiśya. He further adds that he, who wants to get rid of this sin incurred

1. *Vas. Dh.S.* 17.86.
2. Ibid. 17.81-83; 87. *Bau. Dh.S.* 28.39-40.
3. *Bau. Dh.S.* 1.10.18.16.
4. *Vas. Dh.S.* 16.18.
5. *Bau. Dh.S.* 1.10.18.16.
6. *Vas. Dh.S.* 1.20.
7. *Baud. Dh.S.* 2.1.2.3.
8. *Āp.Dh.S.* 2.1.2.6.

by stealing the gold of a Brahmin, should carry a big iron rod on his shoulders to the king and disclose his offence to him. He (the king) should kill him with the same rod and this is his salvation.[1] A similar act of purification is prescribed for him by Vasiṣṭha.[2]

The Sūtras also lay down that those who suffer while protecting the wealth of a Brahmin gain immeasurable merit. According to Gautama[3] the relatives of man, who dies for the sake of Brahmin, do not have impurity generally incurred by the death of a person. The words of Āpastamba are worth noticing in this connection.[4] He states by a simile that a king, who is slain while trying to recover the property of the Brahmin, performs a Viśvajit sacrifice where his body takes the place of a sacrificial post and at which an unlimited amount of fee is given.

(*iii*) *Special person and proprietory rights* : Apart from these privileges, the Brahmins had a specified proprietory right. According to the law code of Gautama[5] a Brahmin may collect by force from a Śūdra articles needed for certain purposes. The other non-Śūdra persons whose property could be utilized by a Brahmin in the hour of need are ; a non-Śūdra, rich in small cattle but negligent of his religious duties, the owner of a hundred cows who does not kindle the sacred fire and the owner of a thousand cows, who does not drink the *Soma*. Thus it means that a Śūdra and others (who do not perform their duties), forfeited, to some extent, their right to property in favour of Brahmins engaged in the performance of their duties.[6] Āpastamba[7] also allows a Vedic student to use the wealth of a Śūdra for similar purposes.

(*iv*) *Immunity from taxation* : The Brahmins were also exempted from the payment of taxes. *Vasiṣṭha*[8] says, "A king

1. *Āp. Dh.S.* 1.9.25.4.
2. *Vas. Dh.S.* 20.41.
3. *Gau.* 14.9.
4. *Āp. Dh.S.* 2.10.26.2.
5. *Gau. Dh.S.* 18.24.
6. Ghoshal (U.N.), *The Status of Brāhmaṇas in the Dharma-Sūtras*, I.H.Q., Vol. 23, June, 1947.
7. *Āp. Dh.S.* 1.2.7.20-21.
8. *Vas. Dh.S.* 1.42-43.

ruling over his subjects according to the rule of the śāstras takes the sixth part of their income except from Brahmins. But according to some Sūtra texts[1] only the *Śrotriya* should not be taxed by the king. In the opinion of Vasiṣṭha the king should not levy taxes upon the Brahmins, because the latter pay taxes to him in the form of their pious deeds.[2] The reason assigned by Vasiṣṭha[3] for such a concession is that the king secures the sixth part of the merit accumulated by a Brahmin by the performance of charitable works and sacrifices. Besides *śrotriyas* and the Brahmins, the women of all varṇas were exempted from taxes.[4] But Āpastamba and Vasiṣṭha give a long list of persons who enjoyed the privilege of not being taxed.[5]

The *Varṇa* distinctions also entered the field of law and justice as we see that the Brahmins were accorded lesser punishments than men of other *Varṇas* in the matter of certain offences. According to Gautama[6] if a Kṣatriya reviled a Brahmin, the fine was one hundred (*Kahāpaṇas*), if a Vaiśya did so it was hundred and fifty, but if a Brahmin reviled a Kṣatriya, the fine was just fifty, if he reviled a Vaiśya it was only twenty five, and if he reviled a Śūdra, he was not to be fined at all. The tongue of a Śūdra who speaks evil of a virtuous person of the three higher Varṇas, shall be cut out.[7] The very fact that the Brahmin was fined sixty, a hundred and a hundred and twenty eight for stealing as against the Kṣatriyas and the Vaiśyas who were fined thirty two and sixteen respectively for the same offence, shows the Brahmins were not always lightly punished.[8]

(*v*) *Adultery* : Adulterous relations of men of higher *Varṇas* were not so severely condemned as those of the lower *Varṇas* with the women of higher *Varṇas*. As there is no

1. *Āp. Dh.S.* 2.10.26.10; *Vas. Dh.S.* 3.26-27.
2. *Vas. Dh.S.* 2.26-27.
3. Ibid. 1.44-46. Vis. 3.27.
4. *Āp. Dh.S.* 2.10.26.11.
5. Ibid. 2.10.26.11-17; *Vas. Dh.S.* 19.23.
6. *Gau. Dh.S.* 21.6-10.
7. *Āp. Dh.S.* 2.10.27.14.
8. *Gaut. Dh.S.* 21.12-14.

special punishment prescribed for the Brahmins in the Sūtras, it is quite evident that either they escaped quite free or that they were branded. According to Vasiṣṭha[1] a non-Brahmin i.e. a Śūdra, a Vaiśya or a Kṣatriya, who has an illicit relation with a woman of higher *Varṇa*, is to be tied up in grass and thrown into fire. Baudhāyana lays down corporeal punishment in the case of non-Brahmin who commits such a crime.[2] Āpastamba declares that a man of first three *Varṇas* who commits adultery with a woman of Śūdra *Varṇa* shall be banished. A Śūdra shall face death if he commits adultery with a woman of any of the three higher Varṇas.[3] For the purification of the raped Brahmin women, Vasiṣṭha[4] prescribes that women of the Brahmin *Varṇa* seduced by a Śūdra, a Vaiśya and a Kṣatriya should be made to ride a black and white donkey naked and with their heads shaved, and smeared with butter and taken to the road's crossing. Elsewhere Āpastamba[5] states that a Brahmin who has committed adultery with a married woman of his Varṇa shall perform one-fourth of the penance prescribed for an outcaste.

(*vi*) *Witness* : Persons of all the four castes could appear as witnesses.[6] A *Śrotriya*, a prince and an ascetic were exempted from appearing in the courts as witnesses.[7] According to Gautama a Brahmin could not be cited as a witness by a litigent if he is not an attesting witness on a document. Gautama[8] further says that a Brahmin must not be forced to give evidence at the word of a non-Brahmin, unless he is mentioned in the plaint. As regards Brahmin witness Vasiṣṭha[9] lays down that a *Śrotriya*, endowed with lustre, character, merit and truth, could become a witness in the court. The twice-born

1. *Vas. Dh.S.* 21.1. *Bau. Dh.S.* 2.2.3.52.
2. *Bau. Dh.S.* 2.2.4.1.
3. *Āp. Dh.S.* 2.10.27.8-9.
4. *Vas. Dh.S.* 21.1-3.
5. *Āp. Dh.S.* 2.10.27.11.
6. *Bau. Dh.S.* 1.10.19.16; *Gau. Dh.S.* 13.4, *Vas. Dh.S.* 15.29.
7. Ibid.
8. *Gau. Dh.S.* 13.5.
9. *Vas. Dh.S.* 16.28.

could become the witness only of a twice-born.[1]

(*vii*) *Brahmin and the treasure-trove* : The plea of the Brahmin's devotion to his duties is held in other passages to justify his claim to the appropriation of a treasure-trove. According to Gautama[2] and Vasiṣṭha[3] a Brahmin, who carries out his duties in the manner prescribed in the *śāstras*, is entitled to keep the treasure-trove found by himself, unlike persons of all other *Varṇas* who have to be content with one-sixth of its value, the rest being paid to the king. If a king himself found a buried treasure, he was to distribute half of it among the Brahmins and keep the other half for himself.

The Jaina texts also refer to this privilege of the Brahmins. A king confiscated the treasure-trove found out by a merchant but the same king honoured a Brahmin who discovered a similar treasure-trove.[4]

CONCLUSION :

A picture of the pre-Mauryan society as presented by the Brahmanical and non-Brahmanical sources clearly shows that society was divided into four *Varṇas*, viz., the Brahmin, the Kṣatriya, the Vaiśya and the Śūdra.[5] Ancient records explain the origin of these *Varṇas* in a similar way.[6] The Brahmin *Varṇa* was considered superior to the other *Varṇaṣ*. According to the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad there was only one *Varṇa* in the beginning and that was the Brahmin *Varṇa*. From this *Varṇa* originated all other Varṇas due to their different functions.[7] This theory makes Brahmins as the source of Kṣatriyas.[8] Again we are told that "he who slights a Brahmin, strikes at his own source, he incurs more sin, as one who slights his

1. *Vas.* Dh.S. 16.30.
2. *Gaut. Dh.S.* 10.43-44.
3. *Vas. Dh.S.* 3.13-14. also *Viś. Dh.S.* 3.58.
4. Jain (J.C.), op. cit., p. 62.
5. *Br. Up.* 1.4.11.,*Ap.Dh.S.* 1.1.1.4.; *Vas.Dh.S.* 2.1.; *Bau.Dh.S.* 1.8.1.
6. Ibid. 1.4.11; 15.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.

superior".[1] The Sūtras also consider the Brahmins to be superior by birth. Among the four *Varṇas* each preceding one is superior to the succeeding one on account of birth.[2] Another text says that a Śūdra gets more merit by serving the Brahmin than the Kṣatriya.[3] Āpastamba declares "A Brahmin though a child, is superior even to a hundred years old Kṣatriya on account of his birth.[4]

We have already seen in the beginning of this chapter that the Brahmanical works place the Brahmins at the top of the social order on account of birth but alongwith it they also lay emphasis on good conduct.[5] This has led some scholars to believe that in the period of Upaniṣads and Sūtras *Varṇa* was primarily a question of character. The conduct of a man counted much more than his birth.[6] But this view is partially correct. Though conduct counted above everything yet in the matter of fixing *Varṇa* birth was given primary consideration.

But against this view of Brahmanical works, Gautama Buddha held that the accident of birth could not determine the caste of a man, but only his *karmas*.[7] Both the Buddhist canon and the Jātakas give importance to the virtuous conduct in calling a man Brahmin rather than his birth. Therefore, it is said that a *cāṇḍāla* was higher than an immoral Brahmin.[8] The Buddha

1. Ibid. 1.4.11.
2. *Āp.Dh.S.* 1.1.1.5., *Kātyā. on Pāṇini* II.2.34.
3. *Āp.Dh S.* 1.1.1.5.
4. *Āp.Dh.S.* 1.4.14.26. Ghurye : *Caste and class in India*, p. 59. Ghurye says that it is very surprising to find such statement declaring the superiority of a Brahmin child over an old Kṣatriya especially in the society where the age was the greatest consideration for respect."
5. *Chā.Up.* IV.1-5. The story of Satyakāma Jābāla proves this point. See also *Vas.Dh.S.* 6.33.; *Śvet.Up.* IV.5. C.A. Moor, op. cit., pp. 326. N.K. Dutt, op. cit., p. 157. This author observes, "though birth had now become the preponderant factor in caste merit was not entirely lost sight of."
6. Ibid.
7. *Majj. N.* 11.48.2.2-61. The story of Vaseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja. See also Rahula, *History of Buddhism in Ceylon*, p. 234.
8. Rahula, op. cit., pp. 234-35; *Sutta nipāta Vasala. S.* (P.T.S.), p. 211.

reserves the word 'Brahmin' for a person who rises above all by his virtuous conduct.[1] Instead of a wholesale and outright denunciation which perhaps was impracticable, the Buddha tried to give an ethical interpretation to the existing *Varṇa*-system which the Brahmins based on birth"[2]. Such an interpretation was not liked by the Brahmins, who regarded themselves as the noblest, the highest and the purest among men.[3] The Buddha did not want to denounce the *Varṇa*-system but he wanted to denounce Brahmin for his egotistic and selfish attitude and proved that they were not the highest.[4] In order to make the Brahmins relize this fact, the Buddha declares that Kṣatriyas are higher than Brahmins.[5] Thus the Buddhists and the Jainas rejected the leadership of the Brahmins and the authority of the Vedas[6] and asserted the pre-eminence of the Kṣatriyas.[7] The Buddha quotes Sanatkumāra in support of above contention.[8] E.J. Thomas observes, "The claims of the Śākyas to belong to the best caste, that of the warrior is well-known; and though in the discourses the Brahmins are treated respectfully, their claims are criticised and rejected"[9]. Not to speak of such persons, even the low-born Cāṇḍālas rejected the superiority of the Brahmins by birth.[10] But this would amount to accepting the *Varṇa*-system with all its defects which the Buddha wanted to remove because the Kṣatriyas were proud of their Varṇa.[11] Rahula points out that the Buddha singled out the Brahmins for his criticism because he thought that it was an attack

1. Rahula (W), op. cit., pp. 234-35.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid. See also Johsi (L), *Vedic Sanskriti kā Vikāsa*, pp. 231-2.
5. Ibid.
6. Rhys Davids : *Dialogues of the Buddha*, part I, p. 99.
7. Ghurye (G.S.), op. cit., p. 71.
8. Sharma (D.C.), *The references to the Brahmanical Religion in the Pali Canon*, Allahabad University Studies, Vol. XI. 1935, pp. 121-53.
9. Thomas (E.J.) quoted by Ghurye, op. cit., p. 71.
10. Faüsboll, *Śvetaketu-Jātaka*, III. 337, pp. 153-56, *Mataṅga-Jātaka*, IV, 497, p. 235-244.
11. Rahula, op. cit., p. 234.

on the total institution of caste as the Brahmin were at the root of it.[1] Moreover, he could not ignore that it was firmly established as a social institution in the world in which he lived.[2] He had to accept it either necessary or justifiable. Having closely examined the Buddhist view regarding the *Varṇa* system, Rahula concludes that Buddhism does not accept *Varṇa*-system as justifiable or good; but since the *Vārṇa* system exists as a reality in society, it is explained by reference to *Karma* theory, yet moral and spiritual attainment is higher than any *Varṇa*.[3]

The Jainas considered the Brahmins as the opponents of their religion.[4] The term *dhikjāti* is frequently used for them in a contemptuous sense.[5] It is well known that no *Tīrthaṅkara*, just as no *Buddha*, can be born in a Brahmin family.[6]

In spite of all these views both the Buddhist and the Jaina texts admit that the Brahmins were held in great esteem by the common people.[7] The very selection of the word 'Brāhmaṇa' by the Buddha for the best of men clearly shows that in the opinion of early Buddhists this word conveyed to the minds of the people an exalted meaning, a connotation of real veneration and respect.[8] We find that the Buddha has himself taken the appellation *Brāhmaṇa*.[9] It has been pointed out by Fick that caste distinction had value for monks even after they had joined the brotherhood.[10] Oldenberg[11] says that in spite of the theory of equality, marked leaning to aristocracy (of all the three varieties, birth, brain and bullion) lingered in ancient Buddhism as an inheritance from the past. There is hardly "any instance in which a *Cāṇḍāla*, the Pariah of that age, is mentioned in

1. Rahula, op. cit., 234.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid, p. 236.
4. Jain (J.C.), op. cit., p. 140.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid., p. 140-41.
7. Rhys David, *Dialogues*, part I, op. cit., pp. 140-41.
8. Ibid.
9. Dhammapada, Verse 422.
10. Fick (R.), op. cit., p. 86.
11. Olderberg quoted by R.K. Mookerji, *Education*, op. cit., p. 389.

order"[1]. Again according to Mookerji, the compound Samana-Brāhmaṇa occurring in the Buddhist texts indicates the equality of position given to the two *jātis* (classes).[2] But this view cannot be accepted as Saman was not a jātic. A Saman was one who devoted himself to a religious life by his own efforts, not by birth.

As in that period, the Brahmins were engaged in various kinds of worldly trades and occupations, in daily life, they could be differentiated only by birth from the rest of the people. Therefore, "the idea of birth could not be dissociated from the word"[3]. And so "the Buddhists failed in their attempt to belittle the Brahmins"[4].

Dr. Ghurye feels that the Kṣatriyas, who were not in favour of the privileged position of the Brahmins, found an opportunity to degrade Brahmins and their sacrifices in the teachings of the Buddha and Mahavira.[5] They turned their attention to the masses and tried to mobilise public opinion by portraying a ludicrous picture of the wide gap that existed between their professions and their practices.[6] In this they failed.

Thus we see that the position of the Brahmin was very high in the society. They had certain avocations exclusively reserved for them. But the Sūtras, the Buddhist and the Jaina works mention the Brahmins who were engaged in the other occupation. They were the most privileged persons in society. These privileges were perhaps due to the Brahmins who lived by the ideals prescribed for them. In matters of marriage, education and the saṁskāras, they were treated differently.

1. Oldenberg quoted by R.K. Mookerji, *Education*, op. cit., p. 389.
2. Ibid.
3. Rhys Davids, *Dialogues*, part I, op. cit., pp. 140-41.
4. Ibid.
5. Ghurye (G.S.), op. cit., p. 74.
6. Ibid.

3

Brahmins in the Mauryan Period

WHO IS A BRAHMIN ?

The *Varṇāśramadharma*, which in the Pre-Mauryan times had become the foundation of social structure, is expounded by Kauṭilya in terms similar to those of the early law-books.[1] In social set-up Brahmins were given "the high place of honour"[2] as if they were gods on earth.[3] For this Brahminhood Kauṭilya takes birth alone as the criterion, because for him, a Brahmin is one who is born in a Brahmin family, of Brahmin parents. Stressing the necessity of pure descent and preventing *Varṇa-saṁkara*, Kauṭilya expects the king to look after these matters with a vigilant eye.[4]

THE HOUSEHOLDER :

(*i*) *Marriage* ;

(*a*) *Forms of marriage* : As regards marriage it rocognises the usual eight types of marriages, i.e. *Brāhma, Prājāpatya Ārṣa, Daiva, Gāndharva, āsura, Rākṣasa* and *Paiśāca.*[5] "Of these", says Kauṭilya, "the first four are valid on their being approved by the father. The rest are sanctioned on the agreed acceptance of the parents of the bride and the bridegroom, because the former receive money paid by the bride-groom. If either be not alive then their heir will

1. Sharma (R.S.), *Aspects*, op. cit., p. 143.
2. Ibid. p. 145.
3. A. Ś. 14.3.23.
4. Sharma (R.S.), *Aspect*, op. cit., p. 144.
5. *A. Ś.*3.2.1-9.

receive the money.[1] Marriage should be endogamous,[2] that is in the same Jāti, but in a different *gotra*.[3] Both the *anuloma*[4] and *pratiloma*[5] forms of marriage are mentioned, although the latter are looked upon with disfavour. In the case of a Brahmin marrying respectively a Kṣatriya, Vaiśya or Śūdra women the sons begotten are *Asavarṇa*, *Ambaṣṭa*, *Niṣāda* or *Pāraśava* respectively.[6] Of these the male issue born of a Kṣatriya woman is put on par with a male issue born of a Brahmin woman, in matters of inheritance.[7]

(*b*) *Niyoga : Niyoga*, is also referred to in the Arthaśāstra and is described with reluctant approval : "On the wife of such a person, a Brahmin, or a *sagotra* relative bearing the same family name and relative of his mother shall beget a natural son and this son may take the wealth (of the father)".[8]

(*c*) *Unlawful marriages* : Children born out of unlawful marriages are called *Vrātyas*, with Kauṭilya giving the term a new connotation.[9] Unlike the earliar definition of uninitiated and the degraded persons being so called, children born of the Brahmin woman's union with the Śūdra and Kṣatriya are called cāṇḍāla and Sūta respectively.[10]

(*d*) *Widow-remarriage* : In addition to *niyoga*, Kauṭilya also allows widow-remarriage, if the lady be without issue and willing. But an issueless widow could refuse a second marriage, provided she handed over her property to the *guru* and stayed under her protection.[11] After her death, the property reverted to the relatives.[12]

(*e*) *Divorce* : Marriage was considered complete only after

1. *A. Ś.* 3.2.10-12.
2. Ibid. 1.3.9.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid. 3.7.20-21.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid. 3.6.20.
8. Ibid. 3.6.24.
9. Ibid. 3.7.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid. 3.2.39-41.
12. Ibid.

the rite of *pāṇigrahaṇa* had been gone through.[1] Men of three higher Varṇas could therefore reject the bride before this ceremony had been completed.[2] As regards *divorce*, it is not allowed in the case of the first four forms of marriages and is implicitly permitted in the case of the latter four forms.[3] Long absence of the husband could also lead to dissolution of marriage, except in the case of a King's servant, sent away on duty.[4] The period of waiting prescribed for wives is longest for the *Brāhmaṇī*, being four years and shortest for the *Śūdrā* being one year only.[5] The presence of children born in wedlock, necessitates the extension of this period by an extra year. In case the departing spouse has provided for maintenance, then the period of waiting stands doubled.[6] Obviously, the marriage-tie is regarded very seriously by Kauṭilya in all cases and especially so in the case of Brahmins. This is also borne out by what follows : "If the husband is a Brahmin, studying (the Vedas) abroad, his wife who has issue should wait for him for ten years, but if she has given birth to a child, she should wait for him for twelve years. If the husband is a servant of the king, the wife should wait for him for whole life."[7] Kauṭilya allows such a wife to beget sons from men other than husband so gone away.[8]

Separation is allowed only if the husband be of bad character, be absent for much too long a period, be a traitor to the king, be a potential danger to the life of his wife, be an outcaste or be bereft of virility.[9] The attitude thus displayed by Kauṭilya is in marked contrast to what we find later, in Manu onwards.

(*f*) *Accounts of the Greek traveller* : Some information regarding the social practices of the Brahmins is found in the

1. *A. Ś.* 3.15.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid. 3.3.
4. Ibid. 3.4.
5. Ibid. 3.4.29.
6. Ibid. 3.4.24.
7. *A. Ś.* 3.4.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid. 3.2.5.9.

accounts of the Greek traveller, Magasthenes (whose excerpts are found in the works of later writers.) He says that Brahmins practice *brahmacarya* upto the age of thirty seven years,[1] to return home thereafter and marry as many wives as possible.[2] The more wives one has, the larger would be the number of good children.[3] For the Greek traveller the Brahmins had no slaves and were, therefore, all the more solicitous of their children's welfare, these being the nearest substitute.[4] He was informed that the Brahmin wives were not let into the mysteries of philosophy lest they should divulge the secret to others or should, feeling enlightened, desert their husbands.[5]

(*ii*) *Inheritance* : We have already mentioned, though in passing, the question of inheritence. Here it will not be out of place to refer to it in detail. Of all the heirs of a deceased Brahmin, the one born of a Brahmin wife stands in the most favoured position. We read in the *Arthaśāstra* : "Of sons begotten by a Brahmin in the four castes, the son of a Bramin wife shall take four shares, that of a Kṣatriya wife three shares; the son of a Vaiśya wife two shares, and that of Śūdra wife one share."[6] And further, "an *anantara* son of a Brahmin, i.e., son begotten by a Brahmin on a woman of the next lower caste, viz., Kṣatriya, shall, if endowed with manly and superior qualities take the share due to the son from a *Brāhmaṇī* who is not alive."[7] In case only one son survives the Brahmin father from the wives of any caste, then he shall inherit the entire property of the deceased and also look after the family members.[8] Even among Brahmin sons born of a Brahmin wife, Kauṭilya prescribes a special share for the eldest son.[9] But a *Pāraśava* gets only one third

1. Mc. Crindle, *Ancient India as Described by Megasthenes and Arrian*, p. 99.
2. Ibid. pp. 99-100.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid
6. *A. Ś.* 3.6.17.
7. Ibid. 3.6.20.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid. 3.6.17.

share, a *sapiṇḍa* (*anagnate*) or a *Kulya* (the nearest cognate of the Brahmin) shall take the remaining two shares being thereby obliged to offer the funeral libation[1]. Or the father of the deceased or the student shall take two shares.[2]

(*iii*) *Food and Drink* : Kauṭilya does not provide us with direct evidence that Brahmins partook of liquor and meat.[3] According to Narhari, "the undertaking of the slaughter of Beasts on a large scale for the supply of flesh to the people including Brahmins (?),"[4] and the existence of "the state-owned drinking saloons to supply liquor to people of all castes, may be taken as sufficient evidence".[5] Kauṭilya favours the sale of small quantities of liquor, i.e., one fourth or one half a *Kuḍuba*, one *Kuḍuba*, half a *prastha*, or one *prastha*.[6] The reason against the sale of large quantities is to save the Āryas from violating rules of decency and help them maintain a virtuous character.[7]

(*iv*) *Miscellaneous* : Kauṭilya assigns a special place for the residence of the Brahmins ; "To the north shall live the royal tutelary deity of the city, ironsmiths, artisans working on precious stones, as well as Brahmins."[8]

Megasthenes seems to echo same thing when he writes that the Philosophers resided in groves in front of the city and led a simple life.[9]

DUTIES OF A BRAHMIN :

In agreement with the Dharma-sūtras Kauṭilya mentions six

1. *A.Ś.* 3.6.
2. Ibid.
3. Narhari, H.G., *Society in Mauryan India*, *New-Indian Antiquary*, Feb. 1940, Vol. 2.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid. *A. Ś.* 2.25. Kauṭilya 2.19.36
7. *A. Ś.* 2.25.
8. Ibid. 2.4.22.
9. Mc. Crindle, *Ancient*, op. cit., p. 99.

duties of a Brahmin.[1] They are, study, teaching, performance of sacrifices, officiating at those held by others and giving and receiving of gifts.[2] But the Arthaśāstra is silent regarding the extent to which these duties were carried out. However, from the injunction regarding the allotment of forest land to Brahmins for soma-plantation and for penances,[3] we may infer that certain sections of the Brahmins had been carrying out these duties. This is reinforced by the frequent occurrence of words like *Vānaprastha*,[4] *brahmacārin*,[5] *yati*[6] *parivrājaka*,[7] etc.

Magasthenes also says that the Brahmins were experts in the subjects which lead to hereafter; they performed sacrifices, received alms, presents and fees.[8]

GAINFUL OCCUPATIONS :

Of the six duties enumerated, above the three, that is teaching, performing sacrifices and receiving gifts were his means of livelihood and were recognised as such in the Dharmasūtras.

(*i*) *Teaching* : Kauṭilya provides for the appointment of a learned Brahmin as the *ācārya* of the king.[9] Although an appointee of state, given his status, he could have been a restraining influence on the king in addition to being the source of instruction for the king and princes. Kauṭilya provides for an annual salary of 4800 *paṇas* for *ācārya*, and an honorarium of 500 to 1000 *paṇas* for other teachers.[10] Kauṭilya insists that persons so appointed must be experts in their lines, capable of imparting both oral instruction and practical train-

1. *A. Ś.* 1.3.5.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid. 2.2.2.
4. Ibid. 1.3.11.
5. Ibid. 1.5.9-11.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid. 1.3.12-13.
8. Mc. Crindle, *Ancient*, *op. cit.*, p. 36.
9. *A. Ś.* 1.7.
10. Ibid. 5.3.

ing in their domains.[1]

Students were placed under the charge of one of the experts or specialists. Among the branches enumerated, we find those of elephants, chariots and war. Reference to *itihāsa purāṇas*, *ākhyāyikās* and other types of stories, the Dharmaśāstra and the Arthaśāstra indicate specialisation in these fields as well.[2]

On his side Megasthenes records that young boys pass from one set of teachers to another in succession, the standard of teacher rising with the age of the boy.[3] This indicates, though indirectly, that teaching might have also been specialised in accordance with the needs of different age-groups of the young scholars.

CONDUCTING OF SACRIFICES :

This was the second means of subsistence for the Brahmins. Both the king[4] and people[5] used to engage priests for the performance of sacrifices. A *ṛtvij* performing sacrifices on behalf of the king was paid 4800 (*paṇas*) as his salary.[6] Elabortating, Kauṭilya prescribes that two or more than two employed in the performance of a sacrifice will equally divide the fee received.[7] He also directs the priests to obtain this fee only after the completion of the sacrifice.[8] Obviously the amount of the fee so received varied from sacrifice to sacrifice.[9] Kauṭilya also gives directions for payment of this fee to the heir of the priest, should the latter expire after the beginning but before the completion of the sacrifice. He says : If a priest, employed in sacrifices like the *Agniṣṭoma*, etc., dies or becomes ill after the ceremony of

1. *A.Ś.*. 1.5.6.
2. Ibid. 1.5.12-16.
3. Rapson, *Cambrige*, op. cit., Vol.I. p. 376.
4. *A. Ś.* 1.19.23.
5. Ibid. 3.19.32.
6. Ibid. 5.3.3.
7. Ibid. 3.14.32.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid. 3. 14. 32.

consecration, (his claimant) shall get one fifth of the promised or prescribed fee (*dakṣiṇā*); should he die after the ceremony consecrating the purchase of Soma, one fourth of the fee, after the ceremony called *Madhyamopasad* or *Pravargyodvāsana*, one third of the fee and after the ceremony called Maya $\frac{1}{2}$ of the share. If the priest dies after the *Prātassavana*, $\frac{3}{4}$ share shall be paid and if he dies after the *Mādhyandina* ceremony, the fee shall be paid in full, for by that time the payment of the fee shall be over.[1] Prof. Sharma has very rightly pointed out that, "The real significance of these provisions regarding payment of the fee of the priest lies in the fact that they are incorporated in the section which deals with the wages of the labourers and those engaged in corporate undertakings, which implies that *dakṣiṇās* (sacrificial gifts) are not voluntary but obligatory inasmuch as their payment is enforced by the State."[2]

In every sacrifice, the fee was given to the priests.[3] In case a priest died, the surviving priests carrying the balance of the fee or any other relative of the deceased shall perform the remaining part of the sacrifice for ten days and nights,[4] The sacrificer could not drive out the priest. The infringement of this rule was to be punished with the highest or the first amercement, i.e., a fine ranging from 48 to 96 *paṇas* in addition to some corporeal punishment such as whipping.[5] Kauṭilya lays down that if the officiating priest becomes ill, the remaining priests shall complete the sacrifice.[6] In case the *Yajamāna* or the *Purohita* discovers that the other party has not kept the sacrificial fire or despite his owning a thousand cows has not performed sacrifices, or that he is a drunkard, or is a preceptor, or is a person living with a śūdra woman, or is the murderer of a Brahmin or a seducer of the wife of his preceptor, or engaged in accepting unrighteous gifts or alms, or is a thief or the priest of persons of evil conduct, then he may abandon the

1. *A. Ś.* 3.14.
2. Sharma, R.S. *Aspects*, op. cit., p. 146.
3. *A. Ś.* 3.14.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.

sacrifice without any risk, since the sacrifice in such a case is, ipso facto, bad.[1]

(*iii*) *The Royal Purohita*: The purpose of the appointment of a *Purohita* was the supervision of sacrifices connected with domestic[2] or state affairs, such as averting of evils.[3] As regards qualifications, we read : "Him whose family and character are regulated by the rules as laid out in the śāstras, who is fully trained in (the knowledge of) the Vedas and the *aṅgas*, in the reading of the portents providential and accidental; in the prevention of calamities providential and human, in performing such expiatory rites as are prescribed in the Atharvaveda, the king shall employ as a high priest"[4]. Among his duties were probably those connected with the worship of Indra, Gaṅgā, *Parvata* and *Mahākacchapa* in case of drought, of rats in case of rat menace, of snakes against snake menace, of Parvata against the menace of tigers and of Caityas (funeral mounds or sanctuaries) against the menace of demons (*rākṣasa*).[5] Kauṭilya advises the king to obey his *purohita* as a student his teacher, a son his father or a servant his master.[6] This however does not signify any sense of servility on the part of the king. In fact we know that the king was not under the domination of the *purohita*.[7] The frequently occurring expression *Purohitācārya-sakhāḥ*, merely indicates the close relationship between the king and the priest as also between the king and *ācārya*. These latter as also other persons, well-versed in the knowledge of the three Vedas, helped the king in discharging his duties.[8] The king used to hear law-suits in the company of persons well-versed in the three Vedas.[9] The *Purohita* could check the prince from wrong acts.[10] Kauṭilya declares that a prince can be pre-

1. *A. Ś.* 3.14.
2. Ibid. 1.17.
3. Ibid. 1. 9.9; 8.1.
4. Ibid.
5. Sharma, R.S. *Aspects*, op. cit., p. 147.
6. *A. Ś.* 1.9.10.
7. Ibid. 9.3.
8. Ibid. 1.19.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid. 8.4.26.

vented from wrong or evil deeds only by ministers or the *purohita*.[1] The importance of the role of the *purohita* is stressed, when we read: "A king whose prosperity is increased by a Brahmin and who enjoys the good advice of his ministers conquers the unconquered even though unarmed."[2] This statement prompts H.C. Ray to ask, "Is it possible then that Kauṭilya regarded the *Purohita* in the king's ministry as a representative of the Brahmins and Brahmanic culture?"[3] He answers the question in the affirmative and feels that the high qualifications required for the office gave it its importance.[4]

In the Arthaśāstra, day-to-day functions as that of offering oblations to Indra and Bṛhaspati, are assigned to the *ṛtvik*, when the chief queen would be in menses.[5] But on important occasions, such as the birth of a prince, performance of the purificatory ritual was the duty of the *purohita* himself.[6] In addition he had to teach the Vedas on certain occasions.[7]

Being well-versed in the science of government, he is also a source of strength to the king in governing things and people.[8] Kauṭilya calls on the king to seek *purohita's* help in testing the loyalty of officials.[9] In such a case, a king would order a *purohita* to teach the Veda to an unworthy person or to officiate as a priest at sacrifices performed by unworthy persons. The *purohita* would refuse and be dismissed. The *purohita* then has enough publicly known reasons for approaching ministers or other high officials of state and of inciting them against the king. Any one so incited would be betrayed to the king.[10] In times of war, a *purohita* was to accompany the army on to the battlefield and exhort the soldiers to fight for victory by saying

1. *A.Ś.* 8.4.26.
2. Ibid. 1.9.11.
3. Ray, H.C. Loc. Cit., p. 391.
4. Ibid. p. 39?.
5. *A.Ś.* 1.17.26.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid. 1.10.2.
8. Ibid. 1.9.9.
9. Ibid. 1.10.2-3.
10. Ibid.

that death in battle would lead them straight to heaven.[1] The art of battle was, in part, based on magical practices originating from the Atharvaveda,[2] and naturally the *purohita* had to be proficient in this art as well.[3] This, in its turn, implied a good knowledge of astrology, which seems to have been held in high esteem at that time.[4] The performance of rites connected with the Atharvaveda was also thought to undo the evil effects of demons'[5] wrath on the country or on the people. Here again the *purohita* was the responsible official.[6]

We have already referred to the annual salary of the *purohita* as prescribed by Kauṭilya.[7] Going into details we find that the assistants of the royal *purohita*, were paid 1000 *paṇas* each[8]. In the *Rājasūya* sacrifice the king is asked to pay three times the salary to the *purohitas* and ministers.[9] In addition to the salary, the *purohita* was given *Brahmadeya* land free from taxes.[10]

Another index, of the importance attached to persons occupying the offices of *Purohitas*, minister and commander, is found in the allotment of special sites of the royal palace.[11] They are to be disturbed or displaced only if they conspire against the state and are found to be in league with the enemy.[12] In such a case, they must not be allowed to enter into any contact with those ministers, whose loyalty may be, then, similarly in doubt.[13] This is also proved by the statement that alongwith the commander, minister, the *purohita's* activities should also be under watch.[14] That the *purohita* could sometimes cause

1. *A.Ś.* 10.3.32.
2. Ibid. 10.3; 12.5; 14.3.14-15; 4.3.51-52.
3. Ibid. 10.3.
4. Ibid. 5.3.
5. Ibid. 9.7.
6. Ibid. 4.3.55; 10.3.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid. 5.3.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid. 2.1.
11. Ibid. 2.4.8.
12. Ibid. 13.5.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid. 19.23.

serious troubles is also shown by Kauṭilya's classifying the discontentment of *purohita* as one of the internal trouble plaguing a kingdom.[1] He prescribes for the tackling of such difficulties, by means of *sāma* and *dāna*.[2]

Megasthenes seems to have stated a part of the truth, when he wrote that the 'Philosophers' (read Brahmins) performed religious rites and officiated as priests at sacrifices.[3] For these jobs, they were employed by private persons. He also referred to the regular holding of a *synod*, a great assembly of these Brahmins.[4]

Although the role of the *purohita* is fairly important, Kauṭilya gives him no place among the state-organs.[5] This seems to be a clear departure from the ideas of Vedic polity and law books where Brahmins enjoy a more privileged position.[6] Prof. Sharma, however, does not take this omission too seriously, because "the Brahmins as a class seem to have been covered by the term *amātyas*.[7]

(*iv*) *Receiving of gifts* : Receiving of gifts was another lawful means of livelihood for the Brahmins. As the Arthaśāstra is not a religious text, we do not find any reference to the practice herein. But as Kauṭilya's understanding of the Brahmin's role in society is the same as in the Sūtra texts, it is clear that gifts must have continued to be a source of their income. The Arthaśāstra enjoins the king to perform sacrifices and bestow *dakṣiṇās* (gifts) on the Brahmins.[8] Kauṭilya also lays down that in expiation of punishing an innocent person, the king shall throw into water, a sum equal to thirty times the fine imposed on the innocent person, dedicating the same to god Varuṇa and that this sum be then distributed

1. *A.Ś.* 9.3.
2. Ibid. 9.5.
3. Mc.Crindle, *Ancient*, op cit., p. 83.
4. Ibid.
5. Sharma, R.S., *Aspects*, p. 23.
   Kauṭilya mentions seven organs of the state viz. *Svāmī, amātya, janapada, durga, koṣa, daṇḍa* and *mitra*.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. *A.Ś.* 1.19.38.

among the Brahmins.[1] Kauṭilya also provides for the allotment of forest-land for soma-plantation and austerities to Brahmins[2]. Here even the method of measuring of such lands is specified[3]. This shows that this source must have provided sufficient income to the Brahmins. Gifts from other individuals must have been an additional source.

(*v*) *Gleaning of corns* : We may mention here practices such as the exclusion of non-*śrotriyas* from *Śrāddha*-meals[4] and the reservation of the right of gleaning grains from a field where, crops had already been harvested, to *uñchavṛtti* Brahmins[5].

OTHER OCCUPATIONS :

(*a*) *Astrologers etc.* : Besides earning their living through the performance of religious duties, many Brahmins were engaged as astrologers, *Purāṇa*-reciters, story-tellers, bards, etc.[6] For them Kauṭilya prescribes a salary of 1000 *paṇas* each.[7] Megasthenes also seems to refer to similar persons when he says that the diviners and sorcerers were adept in the rites and customs relating to the dead and that they begged both in the villages and towns.[8] Their suggestions about improving the crops and breed of cattle, and for promoting public interests were reduced to writing.[9] In case such prognostications were proved false thrice, then the sorcerer had to keep a vow of life-long silence.[10]

(*b*) *Spies and informers* : Brahmins were also employed as espionage agents. Here even poor Brahmin widows were pressed into service, provided they were clever, and desired earning a good living.[11] Exploiting her honoured position a

1. *A.Ś.* 4.11.
2. Ibid. 2.2.2.
3. Ibid. 2.20.20.
4. Ibid. 1.16.16.
5. Ibid. 2.24.30.
6. Ibid. 5.3.
7. Ibid.
8. Mc. Crindle, *Ancient*, p. 103.
9. Ibid. p. 83.
10. Ibid.
11. *A.Ś.* 1.12.6.

Brāhmaṇī of irreproachable conduct could go everywhere, to the houses of ministers, *purohitas*, commanders, etc., indeed even to the king's harem and learn things, which no other spy could ever dream of.[1] H. C. Ray thinks that the institution of *Saṁsthās*, the *Udasthita* (an ascetic fallen from his vows) or *Tāpasa-vyañjana* (an ascetic practising austerities), for instance, counted many Brahmins among their members.[2] Thus it is quite evident from the study of Arthaśāstra that the status of a spy was not inferior to that of any one in society for the five institutions of espionage were honoured by the kings with awards and titles.

(*c*) *Envoys* : The Arthaśāstra also mentions the employment of Brahmins as King's ambassadors.[3] Discussing the principle of inviolability of an ambassador Kauṭilya argues that the ambassador merely conveys what his master wishes to be conveyed. Summing up he says that since the person of even a non-Brahmin envoy is inviolate, there is no question of Brahmin envoy being subjected to any punishment.[4]

(*d*) *Soldiers and generals* : Although Kauṭilya does not favour the employment of Brahmins as soldiers, his reference to Brahmin soldiery shows that Brahmins were also employed as armed fighters.[5] That they could rise to the highest position in the armed forces is shown by the fact that the Mauryan dynasty was overthrown by a Brahmin Commander, Puṣyamitra.[6] Historians are of the opinion that in addition to the Śuṅgas, the Kaṇvas and Sātavāhanas had also been Brahmins.[7]

1. *A.Ś.* 1.12.6.
2. Ray, Loc. cit., p. 393; *A.Ś.* 1.11.1.
3. *A.Ś.* 1.16.17-19.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid. 9.3.22.
   According to Kauṭilya many teachers say, "that of the armies composed of the Brahmins, the Kṣatriyas, the Vaiśyas and the Śūdras that which is mentioned first is on account of the spiritual power and not of bravery, better to be enlisted than the one subsequently mentioned in order of enumeration. A very simple reason is given by Kauṭilya for not favouring their army and that is that the enemy may win over the army of Brahmins by means of prostration.
6. Tripathi, R.S., *Ancient Indian History*, p. 183.
7. Ibid. p. 189, 193.

SOCIAL POSITION OF THE BRAHMINS :

In addition to the gainful occupations enumerated above, certain economic advantages accrued to the Brahmins, through the privileges granted to them by the state and society. Here, however, we should distinguish between two categories of Brahmins, namely the *śrotriyas* and the non-*śrotriyas*. Kauṭilya accords preferential treatment to the former, and it would be well to begin with them.

PRIVILEGES OF THE ŚROTRIYAS :

(*i*) *Immunity of property from confiscation and escheat* : The personal property of a *Śrotriya* was safe from adverse prescriptory rights. Kauṭilya declares that the spies under the guise of the sorcerers shall under the pretence of ensuring safety, carry away the money to the king, not only of the society of heretics and of the temples, but also of a dead man and a man whose house is burnt provided that it is not enjoyable by the *śrotriyas*.[1] Again, the king is asked to lay his hands off the property of the forest tribes, as well as the *śrotriyas*.[2] This rule overrides the rule laying down that "the (king) without a treasury should collect a treasury, when difficulties concerning money have arisen."[3] Thus he enjoyed the privilege of exemption of property from additional taxation or confiscation by the state in times of financial crisis. Nobody could proclaim himself the owner of a building, of a deposit, of a pledge, of a buried treasure, of an article entrusted, of a woman, of a boundary or of the property of the king or a *Śrotriya* on the strength of possession.[4] The inviolability of wealth enjoyed by the *śrotriya* is further borne out by the following declaration of the Arthaśāstra, "He (the exiled prince) should secretly rob the wealth of heretical corporations or the wealth of temples except that belonging to *śrotriyas* or the wealth of a rich widow after

1. *A.Ś.* 5.2.6.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid. 5.2.1.
4. Ibid. 3.16.32.

entering into their confidence, and plunder caravans and sailing vessels, after cheating men by administering a stupefying drink.[1]

A *śrotriya* also enjoyed the immunity of property from escheat. In the absence of a heir the property of the deceased other than the *śrotriya* or an ordinary Brahmin went to the king. But in the case of the *śrotriya* the heirless property went to the knower of three Vedas (*Traividya*).[2]

(*ii*) *Royal Grants* : The *śrotriyas* were also granted *brahmadeya* lands, free from taxes[3]. But they were not allowed to sell or mortgage them to those who were not endowed with similar tenures. In case of infringement of this rule, the original holder was punished with first amercement (i.e. a fine from 48 to 96 plus corporeal punishment).[4]

(*iii*) *Freedom from toll* : The *śrotriyas* were allowed to consume salt without paying any toll (*śulka*) but if they took it for some other purpose, as for sale, they were subjected to the payment of toll.[5]

(*iv*) *Right of appropriation of ripe fruits and flowers* : The *śrotriyas* had also the privilege of appropriating ripe fruits and flowers for the worship of gods and rice and barley for the performance of *Āgrayaṇa* sacrifices (from crown-lands).[6]

(*v*) *Other Concessions* : The Brahmaṇas were allowed by the managers of charitable institutions to reside there if they were of reliable character.[7] Besides, they were exempted from appearing as witnesses except in the case of transactions in their own community.[8] They had the right of receiving back their goods (*dravyam*) lent in preference to every one else except their monarch.[9]

1. *A.Ś.* 1.18.10.
2. Ibid. 3.5.28.
3. Ibid. 2.1.
4. Ibid. 2.1.
5. Ibid. 2.12.33-34.
6. Ibid. 2.24.30.
7. Ibid. 2.36.4-6.
8. Ibid. 3.11.37.
9. Ibid. 3.11.24.

PRIVILEGES OF THE BRAHMINS :

(*i*) *Free passes* : Turning to the privileges of the Brahmins in general, we see that they were provided with free passes to cross the river.[1] The infringement of this right attracted a fine of twelve *paṇas* for the offender.[2]

(*ii*) *Invitation for feasts* : Kauṭilya enjoins that a Brahmin living in the neighbourhood should be invited for meals or at feasts.[3] We do not know whether he enjoins to invite a learned or an ordinary Brahmin living in the neighbourhood. If anyone neglects him, he will be fined twelve *paṇas*.[4]

(*iii*) *Exemption from dues* : They also enjoyed freedom from the payment of dues while passing military stations[5] and were also immune from torture to elicit confession.[6]

(*iv*) *Brahmin's property* : The properties of the Brahmins were as safe as their lives. The Arthaśāstra lays down that the soldiers of a victorious king should avoid seizing and the enjoyment of Brahmin's wealth.[7] It allows the confiscation of the property belonging to the sect of the *Pāṣaṇḍas* provided it is not enjoyable by the Brahmins. This implies that their property was free from such attachment.[8] The Brahmins seem to have enjoyed free grants of land made to the temples.[9]

(*v*) *High place in society* : Among the four castes, the Arthaśāstra accords a respectable position to the Brahmins in society.[10] It prescribes the worship of gods as well as the Brahmins to ward off calamities accruing from fire, floods, diseases, pestilence etc.[11] Moreover, it places the Brahmins at par with the gods.[12] Thus it ordains, "Having bowed to Manu and

1. *A.Ś.* 2.28.18.
2. Ibid. 3.20.14.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid. 3.20.14.
6. Ibid. 4.8.27.
7. Ibid. 3.16.28.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid. 2.1.4.
10. Ibid. 9.5.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid. 14.3.23.

tethered the roguish dogs (*Śunakaphelakāḥ*) and having bowed to the gods who are in the heaven and the Brahmins among mankind, one should perform the act of expiation."[1] Kauṭilya also enjoins a king to follow the *ācārya* (a Brahmin) as son his father, or as a student his teacher or as a servant his master.[2] This very fact is corroborated by the command of Aśoka saying that the Brahmins and *Śramaṇas* must be treated with proper respect.[3] Arrian states that the sophists (who were a kin to the philosophers of Megasthenes) held the supreme place of dignity and honour. They were under no necessity of doing any physical labour or contribute from their own produce.[4] Aristobulus's account of two holy men whom the Greeks had met at Taxila records that they had the right to take without payment any of the wares exposed for sale.[5]

Although Kauṭilya holds the Brahmins in a very high esteem yet he does not give them an undue advantage over others.[6] The preference given to the business of heretical sects (*pāṣaṇḍāḥ*) over that of the *śrotriyas* proves the non-sectarian character of the author.[7] The reasonable attitude of Kauṭilya in dealing with Brahmin offenders is perhaps due to the change in outlook brought about by the political supremacy of the Śūdras, and the decreasing authority of the Brahmins.[8] But Ray chaudhuri has shown that the Mauryas were not Śūdras but Kṣatriyas.[9] The Divyāvadāna also points to the Kṣatriya origin of the Mauryas.[10]

Rapson remarks that the "first rise of Maurya dynasty may have marked an attempt to restore the Brahmin power and to

1. *A.Ś.* 14.3.23.
3. Ibid. 1.9.10.
3. Aśoka's R.E. III, IV; P-E. VII.
4. Puri, *India as described by early Greek writers.* p. 75. (Frag. XI of Indika).
5. Rapson, *Cambridge*, op. cit., p. 378.
6. Ray, H.C., Loc. cit., p. 389.
7. Ibid., *A.Ś.* 1.19.29.
8. Chaudhry, R.K., Loc. cit., p. 48.
9. Ray chaudhry; *Political History of Ancient India*, pp. 354-55.
10. *Diyvāvadāna*, pp. 370-409.

check the rising influence of the heterodox communities."[1] Aśoka's inscriptions indicate that birth in a Brahmin family was no longer an important factor for determining the status of an individual.[2] The practice of morality was more valued than the observance of these ceremonies.[3] This "was an indirect attack on the Brahmins and members of other religious groups who lived entirely on the proceeds of performing various ceremonies for the people."[4] The attack on the sacrifices was not liked by the Brahmins who lived upon them.[5] This hatred grew to the extent of that king Bṛhadratha was killed by Puṣyamitra who once more established the Vedic or the Brahmanical religion [6] In the period of Kaṇvas (a dynasty of Brahmin rulers) and Sātavāhanas the state patronised the Brahmanical religion[7] with the result tha tit regained the lost privileged position. Romila Thaper observes, "The causes of the decline of the Mauryas must in large part be attributed to top-heavy administration where authority was entirely in the hands of a few persons, and an absence of any national consciousness."[8]

In any case, the Arthaśāstra does accord a very high position to the Brahmins.

(vi) Brahmin and the state: The privileges enumerated above look quite impressive when added together and would excite the jealousy of any group excluded from their enjoyment. This is probably why Kauṭilya enjoins the king to protect the privileges of the Brahmins[9] and describes at length the dangerous consequences if he failed in this respect.[10] Not only does he admonish the defaulting king with dire consequences in the life beyond, but he quotes instances from Indian history to show

1. Rapson, *Cambridge*, op. cit., p. 135.
2. Prasad, Narmadeshwar. op. cit., pp. 44-5.
3. *Asokan Inscriptions* 3, 4, 7, 8, 12, 13; pillar I.7.
4. Thapar, R. *Asoka* p. 162.
5. Śāstri, H.P., J.A.S.B., 1910, pp. 259.
6. Tripathi, R.S., op. cit., p. 180; See also Pandey, op. cit., p. 32.
7. Ibid. pp. 191-94.
8. Thaper, R., op. cit., p. 155.
9. *Ā.Ś.* 3.1.54; 1.19.38; 2.1.30-32.
10. Ibid. 1.6.4.10; Bhoja, Karāl, Vaideha, Janamejaya and Talajana, perished due to showing disrespect to the Brahmins.

that any attempt to meddle with the Brahmin privilege was bound to end in disaster.[1] This does not mean, however, that the king was to be a mere puppet vis-a-vis the Brahmins. The fact that Kauṭilya asks the kings not only to appoint their officials[2] but also accords them the right to dismiss the guilty ones,[3] shows that the relations between the state and the Brahmins were based on an equilibrium of rights and privileges, carefully accepted by both sides. The Brahmin privileges remained inviolate as long as they observed their duties both vis-a-vis the śāstras and the state and in return the king was assured of the Brahmins' loyalty, even when he might have found it necessary to punish the unworthy among them.

On political, social and religious matters the king often consulted the assembly.[4] It is quite possible that the Brahmins had majority in the assembly as they were intelligent and learned men. The ancient authorities differ on the exact number of ministers in the *Mantri-pariṣad.*[5] According to Kauṭilya the number of the members of the *Mantri-Pariṣad* depends upon the will of the king.[6] Thus we are told that the assembly of Indra consisted of one thousand sages.[7]

The Greek writer, Nearchus testifies that the Brahmins took part in political life and acted as king's councillors.[8]

THE BRAHMIN AND LAW :

(*a*) *Punishments :* The Arthaśāstra, more or less, accords a privileged position to the Brahmins, be it a matter of administration of law or justice[9] or the award of punishment.[10] According to Kauṭilya a Brahmin plaintiff is not to perform

1. *A.Ś.* 1.6.4-10.
2. Ibid. 8.1.
3. Ibid. 1.10.2.3; 4.8.28.
4. Ibid. 1.15.53-56.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid. 1.15.56.
7. Ibid. 1.15.60.
8. Strabo XV. 1.63.
9. *A.Ś.* 3.1.7.
10. Ibid. 3.18.

any ceremony on his failure to prove his case.[1] A *śrotriya* could become a witness in the case of transactions in his community, otherwise he was excluded from the list of persons who could stand as witnesses.[2] Further, the servant (*Bhṛtya*) cannot give evidence against the master.[3] A Brahmin witness, should be taken before a vessel of water and fire and should be asked to tell the truth.[4]

Insofar as punishment is concerned the matter stands as follows. The immunity of Brahmins from criminal penalty and capital punishment are not unknown to the Arthaśāstra.[5] Punishments based on class distinctions seem to have been devised. Punishment inflicted on Brahmins was decidedly less severe.[6] A Brahmin was exempted from all sorts of badly punishments and tortures, regardless of the nature of the crime.[7] The royal *purohita* was not awarded any punishment which could harm his limbs or property even if he had committed a great crime.[8] Though the Brahmins had thus some preferential treatment in the matter of criminal justice, yet the severity of justice even in their case suggests that they were not beyond the reach of law.[9] Thus, in the case of rape, the guilty Brahmin would be branded on the forehead and banished from the kingdom or exiled to the state mines.[10] The branding was the sign of a dog's paw in case of theft, of torso in case of murder, of Vagina in case of adultery with the teacher's wife and of the vintner's flag for liquor.[11] For serious crimes a *purohita* could be imprisoned or driven away (from the kingdom.)[12] In case of attempting to seize the kingdom, of forcibly entering the harem, of instigating the frontier tribes against the king or

1. *A.Ś.* 3.1.7.
2. Ibid. 3.11.36.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid. 3.11.34.
5. Ibid. 4.8.
6. Ibid. 3.1?.
7. Ibid. 4.8.27.
8. Ibid. 9.3.
9. Sinha (K.N.) *Sovereignty in Ancient Indian Polity*, p. 45.
10. *A.Ś.* 48.27-29.
11. Ibid. 48.27-29.
12. Ibid. 9.3.

of causing disaffection in the forts, a king could even put the Brahmins, so convicted, to death.[1] Death in such cases must be by drowning or such a criminal could be put into a dark chamber for life.[2] Kauṭilya goes further, "In case there be some Brahmins among the several accused, then the Brahmins are to be punished first.[3]

(*b*) *Fines for defamation and for abusing* : The Arthaśāstra also prescribes fines for one who defames other persons. Thus 'if among the Brahmins, the Kṣatriyas, the Vaiśyas, the Śūdras and the cāṇḍālas etc., any one of the lower caste abuses the habits of one of the higher castes the fine imposed shall increase from three *paṇas* upwards (commencing from the lower caste)" If any of the higher caste abuses one of the lower caste, fine imposed shall be decreased by two *paṇas*.[4] Hence the fine levied upon a Brahmin was less than those of men belonging to other castes if he accused the persons of the lower castes. One who uses such contemptuous expressions as 'a bad Brahmin' shall also be punished in the manner declared above.[5]

(*c*) *Punishment for striking* : The Arthaśāstra also lays down that if a Śūdra strikes a Brahmin, then the limb with which he strikes should be amputated.[6] Prof. Sharma doubts the authenticity of this statement on the ground that it agrees in spirit rather with the extremist attitude of Manu.[7] Elsewhere it is also said that amputation of the leg or the hand or a fine of 700 *paṇas* is the punishment for one who strikes against the hands or legs of persons of higher castes or of a teacher.[8] The same punishment[9] is laid down if one mounts the horse, the elephant or the coach of the king. The law was too severe in the case of a śūdra convict. Thus in the case of

1. *A.Ś.* 4.11.17.
2. Ibid. 4.11.12.
3. Ibid. 3.10.44.
4. Ibid. 3.18.7.
5. Ibid. 3.18.7.
6. Ibid. 3.18.8.
7. Sharma, (R.S.) *Śūdras*, op. cit., p. 161.
8. *A.Ś.* 4.10.12.
9. Ibid.

a Śūdra who calls himself a Brahmin or steals the property of the gods (temples) Kauṭilya says that his eyes should be destroyed by the application of the poisonous ointment, or he should be made to pay a fine of 800 *paṇas*.[1]

(*d*) *Adultery* : For the act of adultery[2] with an unguarded woman of Brahmin caste, the Kṣatriya offender was awarded the highest amercement (a fine ranging from 48 to 96 *paṇas* with some bodily punishment such as whiping etc. is called first amercement). For this offence a Vaiśya was deprived of his whole property. And a Śūdra was burnt alive wound round in mats for the same offence. A *Śvapāka* was put to death while the woman was deprived of her ears and nose (for willingly submiting to such a person).[3] The only punishment prescribed for a Brahmin offender is branding and banishment.[4]

(*e*) *Fine for traffic in Śūdra* : A fine of twelve, twentyfour, and thirtysix, and fortyeight shall be imposed on the kinsmen if they sell or mortgage a Śūdra, protected by the offering of food, living a good life, and who had not attained majority, a Vaiśya, a Kṣatriya and a Brahmin respectively.[5] Not only will the kinsmen be punished but also those in whose presence this action takes place.[6]

(*f*) *Fine for illegal constructions* : Kauṭilya also ordains that the middle amercement i.e. a fine ranging from 200 to 500 *paṇas*, should be awarded to one who constructs unlawfully the bridge, the well, the sacred place, the palace, the temple or to one who sells or makes others sell the objects which belong to others with a view to achieve Dharma.[7] If such a bargain takes place in the presence of a *śrotriya*, then he should be awarded the highest punishment i.e., a fine of

1. *A.Ś.* 4.10.3.
2. Ibid. 4.13.33.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid,
5. Ibid. 3.13.1.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid. 3.10.

500 to 1000 *paṇas* (with bodily punishment).[1] From this it seems that a *śrotriya* should try to stop such a bargain and if he fails in his attempts then he should report the matter to the king. The first amercement will be awarded to one who incites others to commit crime and who himself commits the same.[2] And if a *śrotriya* indulges in such acts, he will be given half of the first amercement.[3] Thus Kauṭilya does not allow a man to take law in his own hand and has suggested measures to prevent such happenings.

(*g*) *Punishment for a sacrificer and a priest* : Kauṭilya does not spare even the sacrificer and the officiating priest from punishment. Thus he declares that, if either the sacrificer or the officiating priest leaves without completing the sacrifice, he shall be punished with first amercement.[4]

(*h*) *Fine for using force* : Forcing a person to take forbidden food and liquor was considered no less than a crime for which the convict was punished. Thus a person who forces a Brahmin to partake of forbidden food or drink shall be punished with the highest amercement while on the other hand a man will be punished with the middle amercement if he makes a Kṣatriya partake the same. The same offence against the Vaiśya will be punished with the first amercement (i.e. a fine from 48 to 96 *pāṇas* plus punishment), and against a Śūdra with a fine of 54 *paṇas*.[5] But he has not mentioned about the forbidden food or drink.

Aśoka's observance of *daṇḍasamatā* equality of punishment and *Vyavahārasamatā*, equality in law suits introduced the system of rule of law in the empire, much against the will of the Brahmins.[6] But Ray Chaudhuri interprets these terms as 'uniformity in law and punishment."[7]

1. *A.Ś.*
2. Ibid. 3.1.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid. 3.14.
5. Ibid. 4.13.
6. Chaudhry, R.K. *Loc. cit.*, p. 49.
7. Ray Chaudhry, *Political History*, op. cit., p. 354-55.

SUMMING UP :

The concessions given to the Brahmins by Kauṭilya show that his state policy was founded on religious considerations. At the same time the injunctions which override the privileges of the Brahmins certainly indicate his secular outlook.[1] He has made the priestly power subordinate to royal power. Most probably Kauṭilya wanted to lay down secularism as the basis of the state policies. But he did not succeed in his aim as he lived in a society influenced by religion through Brahmins.[2]

1. Sharma, R.S. *Aspects*, op. cit., pp. 155-56.
2. Ibid.

4

Brahmins in the Post-Mauryan Period

WHO IS A BRAHMIN ?

(*a*) *Varṇa-System :* Manu speaks of the four-fold division of society viz., Brahmin, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya and Śūdra.[1] Patañjali and Vātsyāyana agree with Manu's classification.[2] The Milindapañha tells us that in the city of Sagala, the people of four castes resided[3]. But this text, in line with all Buddhist texts, invariably places the Kṣatriyas at the top.[4] Manu places the Brahmin caste at the top of the social system by virtue of its origin.[5] He states that, 'As the Brahmin sprang from (Brahman's) mouth, as he was first born, and as he possesses the Veda, he is by right the lord of this whole creation."[6] Again the Brahmins are said to be the most excellent of the intelligent mankind and men.[7] "A Brahmin, coming into existence, is born as the highest on earth, the lord of all created beings, for the protection of the treasure of the law."[8] Thus the pre-eminence of the Brahmins is established not only over the *Varṇas* but

1. *Manu.S.* 1.31.
2. Patañjali, *Mahābhāṣya*, 1.1.7. p. 408; *Kāma. S.* V. 11. *Su.* 16; *Yaj.* 1.90.
3. *Milindapañha*, 1.1.2.
4. Ibid.
5. *Manu.S.* 1.93.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid. 1.96.
8. Ibid. 1.98.

over all the created beings."[1] This superiority of the Brahmins is attested in the Mahābhāṣya of *Patañjali*.[2] We read that in a compound, words like Brahmin, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya and Śūdra, take the first, second third and fourth position according to their psoition in the social set-up.[3] At another place Patañjali assigns the Brahmins the foremost place in the social scale.[4] The origin of the Brahmin at first took place from the mouth of the creator so that offerings might be conveyed to the gods and manes and that this universe might be preserved.[5] In this way the Brahmin is the link between men and gods. Brahmins through whose mouths gods continually consume sacrificial viands and manes the offerings to the dead, are considered unsurpassable by the created beings.[6] The Dharma-Śūtras, as we have seen, refer to mouths of the Brahmins as pots in which the gods receive oblations of the devotees.[7] They are said to be the incarnations of dharma on earth.[8] Because of the mere excellence of his origin, Manu makes him the lord of whatever exists in the world.[9] A Brahmin does not depend on others; he eats but his own food, wears but his own apparel, bestows but his own in alms.[10] Other mortals subsist only thanks to the benevolence of the Brahmins.[11]

(*b*) *Pre-eminence of the Brahmin*: Here it may be worth while to examine the causes of this superiority, ascribed to them by Manu, the ancient law-giver. Speculating in this domain, Prof. Motwani puts forward a number of arguments. The first and foremost is the theory of divine origin.[12] His intellectual superiority could have also added to his pre-eminence. Finally

1. Nilkanta *Śāstri* (K.A.) *A Comprehensive History of India*, pp, 459-60.
2. Mahābhāṣya 2.2.2., p. 473, 5.1.115, p. 347; 2.2.34.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid. 6.2.1., p. 188.
5. Manu. S. 1.94.
6. Ibid. 1.95.
7. *Śāṅ G.S.* 1.2.8.
8. *Manu.S.* 1.98.
9. Ibid. 1.100.
10. Ibid. 1.101.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid. 1.93. See also K. Motwani, *Mānava Dharma Śāstra*, p. 93.

the virtuous conduct of the Brahmin, combined with the qualities, mentioned above, must have strengthened his claims. But above all stands the virtuous character of the Brahmin. This virtuous conduct was held to be a sine qua non in a Brahmin. Manu says, "A Brahmin who departs from the rule does not reap the fruit of the Veda, but he who duly follows it will obtain full reward,"[1] and further, "Of Brahmins those learned (in the Veda); of the learned those who recognise (the necessity and the manner of performing the prescribed duties); of those who possess this knowledge, those who perform them; of the performers, those who know the *Brahman* are the best."[2] Elaborating the same theme, Manu puts self-control or control of the senses above all.[3] "A Brahmin who completely governs himself, though he knows the Sāvitrī only, is better than one who knows the three Vedas but does not control himself, eats all sorts of food and sells all sorts of goods."[4] This self-control had to be combined with learning. "Like an elephant made of wood, like an antelope made of leather, such is an illiterate Brahmin; those three have nothing but the names (of their kind)."[5] In consequence the seniority of a Brahmin is in accord with his learning.[6] All this has, however, to be read with his other statments, namely that a Brahmin, even if in years junior to a Kṣatriya, is senior because of his birth.[7] Reading the two together we may infer that birth in a Brahmin family gave a start, but that it could be maintained only with virtuous conduct and sacred learning; can we then say that Manu derived his idea of the superiority of even an infant Brahmin, because he was *the child of* virtuous and learned Brahmin parents ?

In the introduction to the Mahābhāṣya, Patañjali stresses the necessity of a good knowledge of grammar for the *śiṣṭas*[8]

1. *Manu.S.* 1.109.
2. Ibid. 1.97.
3. Ibid. 2.118.
5. Ibid.
5. Ibid. 2.157.
6. Ibid. 2.155.
7. Ibid. 2.135.
8. Chatterji (K.C.), Patañjali's Mahābhāṣya Paśpaśāhnika, p. 7, See also Puri, *India in the time of Patañjali*, p. 89.

as it brings 'enlightenment'[1] and it is 'the best preservative of their moral and cultural integrity.[2] Bright in facial complexion (*gaura*), pure in conduct (*śucyācāra*), of reddish brown colour (*piṅgala*) and with red hair, possibly dyed (*kapila keśa*),[3] the Brahmins were noted for qualities which enabled them to perform suitable religious acts.[4] It is also stated that penance, learning and birth make (a man) Brahmin. A person devoid of these qualities was designated at Jāti-Brahmin.[5] But we are also told that the absence of literary and spiritual attainments, do not in any way lower the status of a (Brahmin) man but the birth in a family.[6] From these two statements it seems that the author gives more importance to a Brahmin who is spiritually advanced, learned and born in a Brahmin family over one who is a Brahmin by birth. This is, generally, in accord with what we have seen in Manu above.

The Milindapañha, like other Buddhist texts, declares that virtues alone make a Brahmin. The Buddha is quoted as having once declared, "I am a Brahmin".[7] For this text, "A Brahmin is one who is endowed with high, good, healthy and divine ideas'[8]; who knows the state of affairs of his previous birth."[9] Elsewhere one who has dispelled all his doubts and illusions; who has vanquished greed; who has freed himself from the circle of birth and death and will not be reborn; who has become pure after destroying evil notions and attachment once for all and who remains content within himself without depending upon others, is deemed a Brahmin.[10] Further, a Brahmin is one who studies himself and teaches others; who accepts alms, who restrains his senses; who develops self-control; who is

1. Puri, *India in the Time of Patañjali*, p. 89.
2. Ibid.
3. *Mahābhāṣya*. II.2.2.2.1., p. 427.
4. Puri, op. cit, p. 89.
5. *Mahābhāṣya*. 2.2.2.1., p. 427; 4.1.48, p. 62.
6. Agnihotri (P.D.), *Patañjali Kālīna Bhārata*, p. 146.
7. Milindapañha, IV. 5.26, p. 220.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.

wedded to duty; and who maintains the high ideals of family."[1] Here again the conduct of the Brahmin was prized more than his birth. The Vajrasūcī Upaniṣad repudiates the idea that a person's caste is determined by his birth and establishes that a person is Brahmin neither by his birth nor by his knowledge but by his conduct.[2]

Besides birth and conduct, Patañjali introduces the element of colour in determining the *varṇas* of a man. At one place Patañjali asks for means of finding out if a particular person is a Brahmin or not? Then he himself says, 'Take him to be a Brahmin who is of white complexion and the rest as non-Brahmins. Black is the complexion of a Vṛṣala".[3] The word used here is *śukla-bhāsvara*, which can denote either 'white-brilliant' or 'clean-brilliant'.[4] Now Yama reckoned as a Brahmin, is *śyāma* in colour and Agni, another Brahmin god, is red-complexioned.[5] If this be correct, then only the second interpretation of the term will make sense. We may then accept this very sense in Manu's use of this term.

EDUCATION :

(*a*) *Upanayana :* The *Upanayana* rite marked the beginning of the child's education. It was virtually regarded as the second birth of the young boy.[6] The child was taken to the teacher by the parents. There he was accepted as the pupil after due rites performed by the teacher. In the case of a Brahmin child this *Upanayana* ceremony took place in the eighth year of birth. Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas were initiated in the eleventh and twelveth year respectively.[7] Yājñavalkya agrees with Manu's

1. Milindapañha, IV. 5.27.321.
2. *Vajrasūcī Upaniṣad* 1.4.9.
3. *Mahābhāṣya* Vol. II. 2.2.1., p. 432.
4. Joshi (L.), *Rajwade Lekha Saṁgrah*, pp. 63-64.
5. Ibid. Here Joshi wants to prove that the complexion of the Aryans was *śyāma*.
6. *Manu.S.* 2.148; 68; *Yāj* 1.39.
7. *Manu.S.* 2.36.37. But the 5th year is recommended by him for a Brahmin child who wants to have proficiency in sacred lore. *Suśruta. Sū.* 2.5, p. 9; *Yāj.* 1.14.

description but also adds that it could be performed according to family custom.[1] "Upto sixteenth, twenty-second and twenty-fourth year is the maximum period of *Upanayana* for the Brahmins, Kṣatriyas and the Vaiśyas respectively."[2] If one does not get himself initiated within the prescribed age limit, he is called a *Vrātya* (out-caste).[3] Any connection with such persons is prohibited by the law givers.[4] Manu and others agree with the authors of Dharma-Śūtras as regards the outfit of *brahmacārins*, such as girdle,[5] garments,[6] sacred thread[7] and the staff.[8] The mode of begging is also identical.[9]

(*b*) *Place of teaching and period of studentship* : Education was imparted in the hermitages of sages.[10] Probably the word *Brāhmaṇakulam* used by Patañjali refers to such educational institutions.[11] Telling about the time limit of the studentship Manu enjoins, "The vow (of studying) the three Vedas under a teacher must be kept for thirty-six years or for half that time, or for a quarter or until (the student) has perfectly learnt them.[12] Yājñavalkya declares that for each Veda the period of *brahmacarya* should be twelve or five years. Some say it should be observed till the Vedas are completely acquired."[13]

(*c*) *Curriculum* : Curriculum detailed by Manu lays emphasis upon the study of the three Vedas, leaving out the Atharvaveda.[14] Yājñavalkya mentions the four Vedas, *Vākovākyam* (the Vedic sayings arranged as questions and answers), the *Purāṇaṣ*, the *Gāthās* (such as *Yajñagāthā*), the *Itihāsa* and Vidyās among the

1. *Yāj.* 1,14.
2. *Manu.S.* 2.38; *Yāj.* 1·37-38.
3. Ibid. 2.39; Ibid. 1.37-38.
4. Ibid. 2.40; Ibid.
5. Ibid. 2.42; Ibid. 1 29.
6. Ibid. 2.41; Ibid.
7. Ibid. 2.44; Ibid.
8. Ibid. 2.45-46.
9. Ibid. 2.49.
10. *Mahābhāṣya.* 4.2.2.2, p. 104.
11. Ibid. 1.1.4.7.
12. *Manu. S* 3.1 2.
13. *Yāj.* 1.36.
14. *Manu.S.* 3.1.

subjects, studied by a *Brahmacārin*.[1] Yājñavalkya also says that the royal priest should be well-versed in astrology and the theory of punishment.[2] Thus it seems that subjects were included in the courses of study. Bṛhaspati makes the interesting declaration that craftsmanship in gold, music, dance, etc. should be learnt in the house of the teacher.[3] This would suggest that these crafts were also taught to the *brahmacārins*. But this injunction goes against Manu and Yājñavalkya who enjoin that a *Brahmacārin* should abstain from dancing, singing and playing (on musical instrument).[4]

(*d*) *The relation between the teacher and the taught* : The relations between the teacher and the taught were very cordial. Patañjali declares that the student should be covered (protected) like an umbrella by the teacher and that the student should look after him like the umbrella.[5] The *ācārya* is considered higher than father who only causes birth.[6] Manu says that the *ācārya* must never get wearied of instructing his pupil and must also, as a teacher, try to maintain a high-standard in respect of his own academic attainments.[7]

(*e*) *Duties of a student* : The student on the other hand should respect his teachers.[8] Manu and Yājñavalkya lay down rules of behaviour in the presence of the teacher by the students.[9] Manu says, "A Brahmin who serves his teacher till his death attains the abode of Brahman."[10] The full benefit of the study of the Veda is said to be gained by those whose speech and thought are pure and perfectly guarded.[11]

1. *Yāj.* 1.40-46.
2. Ibid. 1.313; In first century A.D. medicine and surgery must have been studied as the works of Caraka and Suśurta suggest.
3. As quoted in Vivādaratnākara, p. 141.
4. *Manu.S.* 2 178.; Yājñavalkya's description of the life of *brahmacārin* shows that he is also against his receiving lessons in music and dancing.
5. *Mahābhāṣya.* 4.4.1.62.
6. *Manu.S.* 2.146.
7. Ibid. 2.73. See also P.N.H. Valvalakar, op. cit , p. 128.
8. Valvalkar, op. cit., p. 123.
9. *Manu. S.* 2.198; *Yāj.* 1.26-27.
10. Ibid. 2.44.
11. Ibid. 2.160.

(*f*) *Teacher's fee* : The student did not pay anything in the form of fee to the teacher. Manu and Yājñavalkya severely denounce the person who pays fees and the person who accepts it.[1] But they see no harm in giving a gift to a teacher according to one's own means after the completion of study.[2]

(*g*) *Begging* : The Brahmacārin also begged food for his maintenance from blameless Brahmins and whatever he obtained, he presented it to his teacher.[3]

(*h*) *Kinds of graduates* : Manu and Yājnāvalkya refer to three kinds of graduates viz., *Vidyā-snātaka* (who has studied the Vedas) ; *Vratasnātaka* who has performed vratas or vows and *Ubhayasnātaka* (who has completed both the Vedas and *Vratas*)[4].

Thus "A striking feature of the Hindu system of education was that the training in character building proceeded side by side with the development of the individual student."[5]

THE HOUSEHOLDER :

(*i*) *Marriage* : Manu enumerates eight types of marriages viz., *Brāhma*, *Daiva*, *Ārṣa*, *Prājāpatya*, *Āsura*, *Gāndharva*, *Rākṣasa* and *Paiśāca*.[6] Out of these eight, six were lawful for a Brahmin, the last four for the Kṣatriyas, and the same four, excepting the *Rākṣasa* for a Vaiśya and a Śūdra.[7] Among these six also four are stated to be lawful for a Brahmin, one, the *Rākṣasa* (rite in the case) of a Kṣatriya, and *Āsura* (marriage in the case) of a Vaiśya and of a Śūdra.[8] Though

1. *Manu.S.* 3.156; *Yaj.* 1.220.
2. *Manu.S.* 2.49; *Yāj.* 1.29; 1. 1.27. But Vijñāneśvara holds that speci. fication of Brahmin from whom the *Brahmacārin* was to beg signifies the case when it is possible to get one of that class, and it is not an imperative rule.
3. Ibid. 4.31; *Yāj.* 1.51.
4. *Valvalkar*, op. cit., 128.
5. Ibid. 128.
6. *Manu S.* 3.21.; *Yāj.* 1.58-61 Yājñavalkya calls Manu's *Prājāpatya* as *Kāya* and describes *Paiśāca* marriage as one by deception.
7. Ibid. 3.23.
8. Ibid. 3.24.

Yājñavalkya is silent on this point yet it seems that he is in favour of the first four.[1] Endogamy was the law of the day.[2] In all religious functions, only the wife belonging to one's own caste, was allowed to participate. Thus the real wife of a Brahmin had to be a Brāhmaṇī by birth.[3] To Manu, lust appeared to be the only motive for having extra wives from other *varṇas*.[4] Although authorising an act, that might have been common, he comes down strongly against the espousal of Śūdra women by men of higher *Varṇas*.[5] Vātsyāyana writing a little later, neither prohibits intercourse with a Śūdra woman nor considers it wise.[6] Even here, he totally interdicts the *pratiloma* type of unions and condemns them without any reservation.[7] Yājñavalkya also agrees.[8] It is declared that a twice-born who marries a low caste girl (i.e. Śūdra) will sink to the status of a Śūdra along with their progeny.[9] It is considered highly objectionable that a Brahmin should marry a Śūdra. The dislike of taking a Śūdra woman to bed is shown in statements regarding the condition of such Brahmins after death. A Brahmin who takes a Śūdra wife to his bed will after death, sink into hell; if he begets a child by her, he will lose the rank of a Brahmin.[10] Here Manu is in agreement with his predecessors like Atri, Gautama and Śaunaka.[11] Manu declares that a Śūdra woman is not mentioned even in any ancient story as the first wife of the persons of the three higher *Varṇas*.[12]

1. Chattopadhaya, *Social Life in Ancient India*, p. 58.
2. *Manu. S.* 3.12.; *Vātsyāyana*, III.1.1.
3. Ibid. 3.12; Ibid.
4. Ibid.; *Nār.* XII. 4-6.
5. Ibid. 3.12.
6. *Vātsyāyana.* I.5.3.
7. *Manu.* 3.12.13.
8. *Yāj.* 1,56-57.
9. Ibid.
10. *Manu.S.* 3.17; *Yāj.* 1.56-57; *Brah. Āpaddharma*, 47.
11. Ibid. 3.16.
12. Ibid 3.14. This is open to question, as we have seen in the stories of Mahīdāsa Aitareya, etc. (See Ch. I.).

Manu condemns the progeny of such marriages as base-born.[1] But the mention of Ambaṣṭhas,[2] cāṇḍālas[3] etc., shows that such marriages were also prevalent.

(ii) Inheritance : With regard to inheritance Manu, following the Dharma-sūtras, prefers the son of a wife of the same *Varṇa*.[4] To him he allots an additional portion and one most excellent share from the property of the father.[5] This may consist of 'the slave who tills the field, the bull kept for impregnating cows, the vehicle, the ornaments and the horse.[6] Out of the remainder, the son of the Brāhmaṇī (wife) takes three shares of property, the son of Kṣatriya wife two, the son of Vaiśya wife one and a half share and the son of a Śūdra wife takes one share.[7] The shares of other sons are reduced as we go down the scale, till the son born of a Śūdra wife is alloted only a tenth part of his Brahmin father's estate, even though he be the only successor.[8] Such a son is entitled only to food and clothing and to no more.[9] We also learn that in such a case, the estate is to be handed over to other learned Brahmins.[10] Of course such an estate could not escheat to the crown, as was the case with the estate of persons belonging to other *Varṇas*, dying heirless.[11]

(iii) Food aud Entertainment : Manu has several rules regarding meat-eating.[12] Brahmins can kill animals for sacrifices and for the maintenance of their dependants.[13] Manu

1. *Manu.S.* 10.73.
2. Ibid. 10.8; *Yāj.* 1.91-94; *Nār.* XII. 108; 111-113.
3. Ibid. 10.12.
4. Ibid. 5.9.150.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid. 9.151.
8. Ibid. 9.153.
9. Ibid. 9.154-155; *Bṛh.* XXVI-25; XXVI. 122.
10. Ibid. 9.188.
11. Ibid. 9 189.
12. Ibid. 5.23; 27; 36; *Caraka Sū.* 27.86. considers meat as a very nourishing diet and recommends it for the weak, the convalescent, and the people addicted to wine and women and for those doing excessive physical work.
13. Ibid. 5.22.

thinks that this practice goes back to Vedic times.[1] As regards meat-eating only the flesh of animals, hallowed by mantra-recitation, could be partaken of by the Brahmins.[2] Certain other restrictions are also prescribed.[3] Animals whose meat is allowed[4] and those whose meat is taboo[5]—both these categories are enumerated. As regards occasions when meat-eating was allowed to Brahmins, we have the ceremonies of *madhu-parka*, *śrāddha* and *deva-pūjā*.[6] Fish is especially dear to the Manes as also the flesh of goats, gazelles, kids, spotted deer, black antelope, '*ruru*' deer, boars, buffaloes, hares, tortoises, Vārdhrīnasa, rhinoceros and birds.[7] Manu does not encourage students to take meat.[8] It is, however, understandable that they might have had a share in the meat prepared on the occasion of a *madhu-parka* offered to a prominent guest in a hermitage (*āśrama*).[9] Manu also has certain passages condemning flesh-eating,[10] but Buhler takes them to be later additions.[11]

As regards *Surā*, Manu is categorical in interdicting its use to the Brahmin. He says, "*Surā*, (all other) intoxicating drinks and decoctions and flesh are food of *Yakṣas*, *Rākṣasas*, and *Paiśācas*; a Brahmin who eats (the remnant of) the offerings consecrated to the gods must not partake of such (substances)[12]. He justifies this interdiction by saying that "A Brahmin, stupefied by drunkenness might fall on something impure, or might pronounce Vedic texts, improperly or commit some other act

1. Manu, 5.23.
2. Ibid. 5.36.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid. 5.11-19.
5. Ibid. 5.16-18; *Caraka. Sū.* V 4; 25.38.
6. *Manu. S* 5.41, *Yājñavalkya* (1.257-260) consider the offering of meat preparations or non vegetarian dishes better than milk preparations or vegetarian dishes at *Śrāddha*.
7. Ibid, 3.268-272; Ibid. I. 257-260.
8. Ibid. 11.158.
9. Kane and Joshi, *Uttararāmacarita of Bhavabhūti*, pp. 86-17.
10. *Manu. S.* 5.48; 54.
11. Om Prakash, op. cit., 111.
12. Manu. S. 11.95.

which ought not to be committed."[1] Further, when the Brahman (the Veda) which dwells in his body, is (even) once deluded with spirituous liquor, his brahminhood forsakes him and he becomes a Śūdra."[2] He, therefore, includes the *surā* addict among the great sinners.[3] A Brahmin found guilty of this *sin* was to be branded on his forehead, with the sign of tavern.[4] Such a one was to be awarded the highest amercement and banished after being provided with food and clothing.[5] Serious consequences even after death were fore-told for such a one. It is laid down that the drinker of *Surā* (the spirituous liquor) shall enter the body of small and large insects, of moths, of birds feeding on ordure, and of destructive beasts.[6]

Although Patañjali does not like the liquor-addict,[7] we find that drinks, soft and alcoholic were popular in society.[8] Of the latter he enumerates three varieties, i.e. *surā*, *prasauṇa* and *suṇḍa*.[9] Interdicting of surā is almost toto for a Brahmin[10] and for his wife.[11] As regards the medical treatises, they seem to consider the problem strictly from the view-point of health and prescribe its use in limited quantities as curatives.[12] Such use is pleasing, aids digestion and improves intelligence.[13]

MISCELLANEOUS :

(*a*) *Naming ceremony* : *Varṇa* distinctions were maintained in the ceremony of naming the child. According to

1. *Manu.S.* 11.96.
2. Ibid. 11.97.
3. Ibid. 9.235.
4. Ibid. 9.237.
5. Ibid. 9.241.
6. Ibid, 12.57.
7. *Mahābhāṣya*. 3.2.8.
8. Puri, op. cit., p. 98.
9. Ibid. p. 98.
10. *Mahābhāṣya*. 6.1.4.84. Brāhmaṇavadhe surāpāne ca mahān doṣa Uktaḥ.
11. Ibid. 3.2.8. Yā Brāhmanī surāpī bhavati nainaṁ devāḥ patiloke nayanti.
12. *Caraka. Sū*. 27, pp. 191-93.
13. Ibid.

Manu, a Brahmin's name should denote something auspicious, that of a Kṣatriya power, that of a Vaiśya wealth and that of a Śūdra something lowly.[1] As a corollary he states that the titles of the members of the four *Varṇas* should respectively imply happiness, protection, prosperity and service[2].

(*b*) *Guest-honouring* : Manu[3] gives the same rules about the honouring of the guest as are given in the Dharma-śāstras. A Brahmin who stays for one night only is deemed a guest (*atithi*): because he stays (*sthita*) not long (anityam), so he is called *atithi* (a guest).[4] But for the sake of meal only a Brahmin should not disclose his identity i.e., his *gotra* and family, otherwise he will be designated a foul feeder (*Vāntāśin*).[5] Non-Brahmins were not received as guests in the house of a Brahmin.[6] If a Kṣatriya came as a guest to a Brahmin, he was to be entertained after the Brahmin guests had been looked after.[7] A Brahmin-*atithi*, not suitably honoured, takes away all the spiritual merit even of a man who subsists by gleaning ears of corn, or offers oblations in five fires.[8] Manu ordains, "a guest who arrives at the setting sun i.e. in the evening must not be driven away by a householder; whether he came at (supper) time or at an inopportune moment, he must not stay in the house without entertainment."[9] Yājñavalkya[10] completely agrees with Manu and adds that after satisfying him with food he should accompany the guest, if he be a *śrotriya*, till the boundary of the village.[11] Manu also lays down that "one must not consider a Brahmin a guest if he dwells in the same village, nor one who seeks his livelihood by social intercourse even though he has

1. *Manu.* 2.31.
2. Ibid. 2.32. Kullūka comments that these titles should be respectively *Śarman, varman, bhūti* and *dāsa.*
3. Ibid. 3.105.
4. Ibid. 3.102.
5. Ibid. 3.109.
6. Ibid. 3.110.
7. Ibid. 3.111.
8. Ibid. 3.100.
9. Ibid. 3 105.
10. *Yāj.* 1.107.
11. Ibid. 1.113; 109. He should also show to him (a *śrotriya*) a big bull or a big goat.

come to a house where there is a wife and where sacred fire is kept."[1] Vaiśya and Śūdra guests are to be fed along with the servants of the Brahmin hosts.[2] Manu does not approve of any contact between the Brahmins and untouchables. A *snātaka* should not stay with *cāṇḍālas*, *pukkasas*, *antyas*, *antyāvasāyins*.[3]

(*c*) *Mode of salutation* : Manu says that a Brahmin while saluting his elders must pronounce his name saying 'I am so and so.'[4] The other person should salute him in return saying, "May'st thou be long-lived, O gentle one !" and the vowel 'a' must be added at the end of the name (of the person addressed) the syllable preceding it being drawn out to the length of the three moras."[5] A Brahmin who does not know the way of returning the salutation must not be saluted by a learned man; as a śūdra, even so is he.[6]

(*d*) *Mode of enquiry* : Different modes of enquiry are also laid down with regard to different Varṇas. Let a person 'ask a Brahmin, on meeting him about his health with the word *Kuśala*, a Kṣatriya with the word *anāmaya*, a Vaiśya with the word *Kṣema* and a Śūdra with the word *ārogya*.[7]

(*e*) *Mourning Period* : Even in the matter of mourning a shorter period is prescribed for a Brahmin mourner than for those belonging to other castes. Thus, "A Brahmin shall be pure after ten days, a Kṣatriya after twelve days, a Vaiśya after fifteen days and a Śūdra after a month.[8] It is also stated that, "A Brahmin who has touched a human bone to which fat adheres, becomes pure by bathing, if it is free from fat, by sipping water and by touching (afterwards) a cow or looking at the sun."[9] The taint of impurity does not fall on

1. *Manu*. 3.103.
2. Ibid. 3.112. If a Kṣatriya guest comes to the house of a person then he should be fed after the Brahmin guests had taken the food. (3.111).
3. Ibid. 4.79.
4. Ibid. 2.122.
5. Ibid. 2.125.
6. Ibid. 2.126.
7. Ibid. 2.127.
8. Ibid. 5.83; *Yāj*. III. 22.
9. Ibid. 5.87.

kinsmen of those who die for the sake of Brahmins and cows.[1] At the end of the period of impurity, a Brahmin, a Kṣatriya, a Vaiśya and a Śūdra were purified by touching water, the animal on which he rides and his weapons, his goad or the nose-string (of his oxen), his staff respectively.[2] Manu ordains that the kinsmen of the dead Brahmin should not allow a Śūdra to carry a Brahmin's corpse because that will bar the deceased from entering heaven.[3]

(*f*) *Certain-beliefs* : There are also certain rules in theManusmṛti which deal with the behaviour to be followed in connection with the Brahmins. One of them prescribes that a man should "pass by (a mound of) earth, a cow, an idol, a Brahmin, clarified butter, honey, a cross-road, and a well-known tree, turning his right hand towards them."[4] Another rule declares that intellect of a man who voids urine against fire, the sun, the moon, a Brahmin, a cow or the wind perishes."[5] It is also declared that even the critics of the king should not speak ill of the Brahmins[6]. A person is asked not to cross fire, cow, guru, Brahmin and a couple.[7] He should also avoid crossing the shadow of the gods, a cow, a Brahmin, a temple, a flag, a diseased person, a fallen person and a sinner.[8] None should touch a Brahmin, fire, or a cow while eating.[9] Visions of gods, *dvijas*, bulls, friends and the king in a dream were considered auspicious.[10]

(*g*) *Commensality* : Manu ordains that a Brahmin should always avoid the contaminating company of a Śūdra.[11] A Brahmin who lives in the company of the most excellent people and shuns all low people becomes most distinguished. Conduct in

1. Manu. 5.95.
2. Ibid. 5.99.
3. Ibid. 5.104.
4. Ibid. 4.39.
5. Ibid. 4.52.
6. Suśruta, ciki. 24,93, p. 460.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid. 24.10. p, 461.
10. Ibid. *Sūtrasthānam* 29.75, p. 109.
11. *Manu*. 4.245.

the opposite direction degrades him to the position of a Śūdra.[1] Manu has additional rules for the *Snātaka*,[2] though they do not seem to be for the Brahmin *snātakas* alone.[3] Thus a learned Brahmin must not take the food of a Śūdra not performing the rites of *śrāddha*, although in the time of distress he could accept raw grains sufficient to maintain himself for one night.[4] Here are cited examples of Viśvāmitra and others, who took even the forbidden food from the hand of a Cāṇḍāla.[5] A Brahmin eating the leavings of women and Śūdras in normal times incurred great sin and had to purify himself by living on barely gruel for seven days and nights.[6] This rule clearly applies to all the *dvijas*.[7] Similarly, the expiation, prescribed for drinking water touched by a Śūdra, is the drinking of water boiled with *kuśa* for three days.[8]

Patañjali defines *niravāsita* Śūdras as *cāṇḍālas* and *mṛtapas*, whose food vessels could not be used by the people of the higher *Varṇas*.[9] Manu uses the term *apapātra* for persons breaking this rule.[10] Obviously these rules apply mainly to the Brahmins. Patañjali also indicates a similar social distinction between the Brahmin and the *vṛṣala* when he says that the Brahmin has white teeth, the *vṛṣala* has *black*;[11] the Brahmin gets a high seat but the *vṛṣala* a low-seat.[12] A person can afford to mistreat the *vṛṣalī* and *dāsī* but not a *Brāhmaṇī*.[13] Manu enjoins that members of higher *varṇas* should not give to cāṇḍāla and

1. *Manu*. 4.245.
2. Ibid. 4.211, 215-16, 218, 219.
3. Sharma (R.S.), *Śūdras*, op. cit., p. 200.
4. *Manu*. 4.223.
5. Ibid. 10.106-8.
6. Ibid. 11.153.
7. Śharma (R S.), *Śūdras*, op. cit., p. 201.
8. *Manu*. 11.149.
9. *Pat*. Pā II. 4.10.
10. *Manu*. X.51.
11. *Pat*. on Pā. II. 2.8-11.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid. 1.3.55.

śvapacas even grains with their hands.[1]

DUTIES :

The Brahmins were called upon by Manu to perform the same duties, laid down in the Dharma-sūtras, i.e., learning, teaching, sacrificing for their own benefit and for others, giving and accepting of alms.[2]

(*i*) *Learning :* Learning includes in it the Vedas along with other auxiliary sciences. The study of the Veda[3] was so important that its negligence could cause the degradation of caste.[4] We read in Manu, "A twice-born (*dvija*) man, who not having studied the Veda, applies himself to other (worldly) studies soon falls, even living, into the condition of a Śūdra and so his descendants too (after him)."[5] Further, "The study of the Vedas is declared to be in this world the highest austerity for a Brahmin."[6] Among the Brahmins, those well-versed in the Veda, were considered the best.[7] A learned Brahmin is asked to study the Vedas carefully and duly instruct the pupil in that sacred lore."[8] Manu declares that, "A Brahmin who studies these institutions and who faithfully fulfils the duties (prescribed therein), is never tainted by sins, arising from thoughts, words and deeds."[9] Such a Brahmin sanctifies any company (which he may enter), as also his seven ancestors and seven descendents, and he alone deserves to possess the whole earth.[10]

1. *Manu.* X. 53-54.
   Śvapaca is one who is begotten upon an *Ugra* woman (a girl begotten upon a Śūdra female by a Kṣatriya male) by a *Kṣatta* male (one born out of the union of a Śūdra male and Kṣatriya female).
2. *Manu.* 1.88; *Yāj.* 1.118; *Saund.* 1.44.
3. Ibid. 10.1; *Yāj. Saund.* 1.44; 18.1.
4. Ibid. 2.168.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid. 2.166.
7. Ibid. 1.97.
8. Ibid. 1.103.
9. Ibid. 1.104.
10. Ibid. 1.105.

The learning of the Veda makes the Brahmin's life worthwhile,[1] "For that secures the attainment of the object of existence, expecially in the case of the Brahmins, because by attaining that, not otherwise, a twice-born man, gains all his ends."[2]

Patañjali, on the other hand makes the disinterested study of the Vedas along with its six subsidiary studies obligatory for a Brahmin. Among the latter, grammar is the principal one, and efforts directed towards the same are always crowned with success.[3] Then follow details regarding the study of grammar, called *sabdānuśāsana*.[4] Stressing its importance for the study of the Veda, Patañjali narrates the old story which says that the demons mispronounced the word of an incantation while sacrificing, with the result that they were defeated by the gods.[5] Then he quotes the *kārikā* regarding the necessity of correctly reciting the mantras.[6] Comparing the diligence of the Brahmins of yore in the study of grammar and those of his own times, he deplores the lack of stress on grammar as a preparation to the study of the Veda.[7] The author also refers to the ancient practice of studying grammar, after the completion of the sacred thread ceremony.[8]

The Milindapañha has a story regarding a Brahmin Nāgasena who in his seventh year, was told by his father that the study of the Vedas was compulsory in his family. He was taken to a teacher, to whom one thousand coins were paid as the fee. Nāgasena learnt by heart the Vedas only in one reading and fully understood them. An expert in the Vedas, he is said to have mastered the grammar, *chhandas*, language, history, leaving out virtually nothing. He became the master, of the knowledge of interpreting the signs of foot-prints, of grammer, of *lokāyata* and the *śāstra* stating the qualities of a great man.[9]

1. Manu. 12.13.
2. Ibid, 12.93.
3. *Mahābhāṣya*. 1.1.1., p. 23.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. *Milindapañha*. 1.22.

Clearly the study of the Vedas along with other sciences was undertaken by Brahmins. The love of learning and knowledge made the Brahmins superior to persons of other *Varṇas*. This text also gives a detailed list of subjects to be studied by the children of Brahmins.[1] It includes the study of the four *Vedas*, the signs of the body, the *Itihāsa*, the *Purāṇas*, the *Nighaṇṭu*, the *Kaiṭubha*, the *Pādas*, the grammar, the astrology, etc.

(*ii*) *Sacrificing* : To perform sacrifices was incumbent upon the Brahmins.[2] "A Brahmin shall always offer the *agnihotra* at the beginning or at the end of the day and of the night, and the *Darśa* and *Paurṇamāsa* (*Iṣṭis*) at the end of each half-month."[3] An Agnihotrin is required to perform a lunar penance during one month if he voluntarily neglects the sacred fire, this neglect being equal to the slaughter of a son.[4] For Manu, a Brahmin who though wealthy, does not give, as fee for the performance of an Agnyādhāna, a horse sacred to Prajāpati, becomes equal to one who has not kindled the sacred fire."[5] A Brahmin should untiringly offer the sacrifices.[6] Manu states that, "Having performed the *Iṣṭi*, sacred to the lord of creatures (Prajāpati) where he gives all his property as sacrificial fee, having reposited the sacred fire in himself, a Brahmin may depart from his house as an ascetic."[7] A Brahmin could take the article required for the completion of sacrifice on which he has embarked, from the house of any Vaiśya, who possessed a large number of cattle, but neither performs the minor sacrifices nor drinks the soma juice.[8] This shows that the people of other castes were also asked by Manu to perform sacrifices. A Brahmin was forbidden to beg for performing a sacrifice from a Śūdra, as by so doing, he would be reborn as a *cāṇḍāla*.[9] In this

1. Milindapañha. IV. 3.36.
2. *Manu*. 10.74. *Yāj*. 1.118.
3. Ibid. 4.25.
4. Ibid 11.41.
5. Ibid. 11.38.
6. Ibid. 4.226.
7. Ibid. 6.38.
8. Ibid. 11.11-12.
9. Ibid. 11.24.

life too such persons receive censure and condemnation from those who recite the Vedas.[1] It is laid down that if a Brahmin, having acquired some property for a sacrifice does not use it entirely (for that purpose), he is reborn as a *Bhāṣa* or crow and spends a hundred years in that state.[2] Patañjali refers to sacrifices, performed by him for the Brahmin ruler Puṣyamitra.[3] In the Mahābhāṣya *Agniṣṭoma* is associated with Brahmins.[4] The Ayodhyā inscription (3rd C.A.D.) of Dhanadeva records that two *Aśvamedha* sacrifices were performed by the ruling king.[5] It refers to so many other sacrifices.[6] According to Keith the Vājapeya is performed by the king before the Rājasūya and by the Brahmins before *Bṛhaspatisava*, a festival celebrated on his appointment as a royal priest.[7] For Patañjali the performance of the *Pañca-Mahāyajñas* is incumbent on every householder.[8] The five-*mahāyajñas* mentioned by Manu are : the *Pitṛyajña*, the *Brahmayajña*, the *Devayajña*, the *Bhūtayajña* and the *Nṛyajña*.[9] The performer of an *Agniṣṭoma* was supposed to free the *Yajamāna* from rebirth.[10]

(iii) Giving of gifts : If the receiving of gifts was the privilege of the Brahmin, the offering of gifts was also his duty. We have already referred to certain provisions regarding the receiving of gifts. We will now give the details of gifts-giving on the part of the Brahmin. At one place Manu counts the Brahmin donor of a thousand cows among those who sanctify a gathering.[11] At another place he enjoins upon the

1. Manu. 11.42.
2. Ibid. 11.25.
3. Mahābhāṣya. III. 2.123. p.123; III. 1.26, p. 26. iha puṣyamitram yājayāmaḥ; puṣyamitro yajate, yājakā yājayantīti."
4. Ibid. VI. 1.84, p. 57.
5. J.B.O.R.S., Vol. X, p. 203. L, 21. dviraśvamedhayājinaḥ senāpateḥ puṣyamitrasya.
6. Agniṣṭoma, Rājsūya, Vājapeya and the domestic ones.....Pākayajña or pañcayajña etc.
7. Macdonell and Keith, *Vedic Index*, Vol. II, p. 256.
8. *Mahābhāṣya*. IV. 1.33, p. 214.
9. *Manu*, 3.70.
10. *Mahābhāṣya*. III. 4.1.. p. 168,
11. Manu. 3.186; 4.226.

wealthy Brahmins the duty of compassionately supporting an indigent Kṣatriya or Vaiśya, by putting them on work in keeping with their respective *Varṇa*.[1] As Manu does not exclude the Brahmins from the duty of alms-giving, it is clear that the wealthy among them were expected to give alms along with others so placed. Later, we have the *Śukla* Brahmins who claim to accept gifts only from Brahmins and from no one else.

GAINFUL OCCUPATIONS :

(*i*) *Accepting of alms* : Accepting of alms was one of the lawful means of subsistence for a Brahmin.[2] Manu says that receiving of gifts from an unworthy person (or a Śūdra) is worse than the act of teaching him or officiating as a priest for him"[3]. He should accept the gift only from a worthy person. A Brahmin is asked to 'acquire wealth only just sufficient to maintain himself, and his family, and to enable him to perform his religious duties without causing harm to others, and without unduly worrying his own body"[4]. He (Brahmin) may either accumulate so much grain (but not more) as would fill a kusūla (a granary) or a *Kumbhī* or he may have as much corn as would satisfy all his needs for three days or as much as will suffice for the day that is on.[5] Out of these four methods, each succeeding one was superior to each preceding one.[6] In this connection Patañjali says, "In this Āryāvartta, those Brahmins who are *Kumbhīdhānyas* (i.e. who live on grain collected in a *kumbhī*) who are not greedy and who do not lay hands on things belonging to others and are well-versed in some kind of knowledge are the best Brahmins (*śiṣṭas*).[7] Coming back to Manu we read that if a Brahmin cannot maintain himself, he

1. *Manu*. 8.411.
2. Ibid. 4.2-3.
3. Ibid. 10.109-11.
4. Ibid. 4.2-3.
5. Ibid. 4.7-8.
6. Ibid.
7. *Mahābhāṣya*. 6.3.3.109, p. 261.

should live by collecting the ears of corns or grains left in the field rather than receive a gift".[1] Manu further adds that a Brahmin should cultivate supreme contentment and though desirous of happiness should restrain himself (in the pursuit of wealth)"[2]. He should not, even when in distress, hanker after the acquisition of wealth by excessive attachment or doing what is forbidden or accepting gifts from any person whatsoever (of blemished character).[3] He should not follow the pursuits that are opposed to or hinder his Vedic studies.[4] A Brahmin, when oppressed by hunger, should seek help from his pupil or from one who is able and willing to offer a sacrifice. But he should not receive a gift from an irreligious king or any other similar donor.[5] This would mean that he is not supposed to receive gifts or wealth when he is not hungry or if he possesses sufficient wealth either obtained by inheritence or partition or any other way.[6] A Brahmin may secure gifts from any other twice-born men (*dvijāti*) if he cannot secure them from the above three. Manu, however, does not like it much.[7] Manu allows him to seek gifts from anybody including a Śūdra if he is in extreme distress.[8] But a Brahmin should not seek gifts from a Śūdra for the performance of sacrifice or for *agnihotra* as this would cause him to be re-born as a cāṇḍāla.[9] A Brahmin trying to support his hungry elders (parents), his dependants (wife, servants, etc.) and about to worship gods and honour guests may accept a gift from any body (except a *patita*), but he should not satisfy his own hunger with that wealth.[10] Yājñavalkya is of the opinion that he could also satisfy his hunger with that wealth.[11] Among the persons, from whom gifts

1. *Manu.* 10.112; *Yāj.* 1.128.
2. Ibid. 12,15; Ibid. 1.1.29.
3. Ibid. 4.12;16; Ibid.
4. Ibid. 4.12-17.
5. Ibid. 4.33; *Yāj.* 1.100;130.
6. P. V. Kane, op. cit., Vol. II, pt. I, p. 112.
7. *Manu.* 10.102-103; 4.186.
8. Ibid. 10.102-103; *Yāj.* 3.41.
9. Ibid. 11,24; 42; Ibid. I. 127.
10. Ibid. 4.251; Ibid. 1.216.
11. *Yāj.* 1.216.

should not be taken, figure the non-Kṣatriya king, the butcher, the oilman, the keepers of a tavern and of a brothel, the courtesan,[1] the king who is avaricious and who transgresses the law of the śāstras.[2] Manu prescribes that a Brahmin, unlearned in the Śāstras, is reduced to ashes like dry fuel if he accepts gifts of gold, land, horses, cows, food, clothes, sesame and ghee; that a Brahmin who, though devoid of learning and *tapas*, desires to accept gifts sinks (into hell) like one one trying to cross water in a stone-boat sinks in water and that therefore such a Brahmin should be afraid of receiving gifts.[3] It also lays down that a gift given to such a Brahmin is fruitless and leads the donor to hell.[4] Manu says nine kinds of *snātaka*-Brahmins, who are poor, are the primary recepients of gifts of food and fee inside the sacrificial altar; while others should receive food and fee outside the altar (*bahirvedi*),[5] An unsolicited gift may be taken from even one who is guilty of bad acts, except from an unchaste women, an impotant person and a *patita*.[6]

Manu prefers a learned neighbouring Brahmin to one who lives away. But an ignorant neighbouring Brahmin should be passed over in favour of a learned Brahmin who lives away.[7] From a verse of Manu, where he compares the offering of gifts to various types of Brahmins with those offered to non-Brahmins, it can be inferred that non-Brahmins could also have been the recepients.[8] Yājñavalkya for his part does not mention birth for a Brahmin as a necessary condition for receiving gifts.[9] Manu has more details about those qualified

1. *Manu.* 4.84.
2. Ibid. 4.87; *Yāj.* 1.140.
3. Ibid. 4.188-91; Ibid. 1.200-202.
4. Ibid. 4 192.
5. Ibid. 11.1-3.
6. Ibid. 4.248-49; Yāj. 1.215. Manu also lists several types of men whose gifts are not to be accepted, (4.205-224).
7. *Manu.* 8.392; *Yāj.* 106. enjoins that gift-giving to a worthy person at proper time is the right act of Dharma.
8. *Manu.* 7.85.
9. *Yāj* 1.200.

to receive gifts outside the *Vedi*. Gifts to them are obligatory.[1] The Kāma sūtra considers the gift of a thousand cows to Brahmins as one of the highest aims in a rich lady's life even if she be a courtesan In this case the gift had to be made through a third person, she herself being a fallen woman.[2]

(ii) Teaching : Teaching (especially of the Vedas) was the duty of the Brahmins[3] and also a lawful means of their livelihood. They alone could teach.[4] Manu cites in support of his declaration that the Brahmins were the protectors of knowledge, the well-known verses of the Nirukta, about learning seeking the protection of a Brahmin, etc.[5]

In this very context Manu also explains the terms, *ācārya*[6] *upādhyāya*,[7] and *guru*[8] and has details regarding the mutual relationship between the teacher and the taught. Needless to say that it had to be based on total respect for the teacher.[9] Manu discourages Brahmins from depending solely on non-Brahmin teachers, though it seems that in certain cases, this could not have been avoided.[10]

Patañjali's point of view is in accord with the views expressed above. He also uses the terms, *ācārya*,[11] *guru*,[12] *śikṣaka*[13] and *Upādhyāya*.[14]

1. *Manu*. 11.13.
2. Chaklader (H.C.), *Social life in Ancient India* pp. 74-76; *Kām. Sū*. 5.4. 25; *Buddhacarita*. 1.84.
3. *Manu*. 1.88.
4. Ibid. 1.103; 10.1.
5. Ibid. 2.114-15.
6. Ibid. 2.140; *Yāj*. 1.34. According to Manu *ācārya* is one who initiates a pupil and teaches him the *Vedas* together with *Kalpa* and *Rahasyas*.
7. Ibid. 2 141. *Yāj*. 1.35. Manu defines *upādhyāya* as one who for his livelihood teaches a pupil a portion only of the *Veda* or also the *aṅgas* of the *Vedas*.
8. Ibid. 2.142; Ibid. 134. *Guru* is described as one who performs the rites such as Garbhādhāna and so forth and gives food to the child.
9. Ibid. 2.225; 4 162.
10. Ibid. 2.241-44.
11. *Mahābhāṣya*. IV. 3.131, p. 320.
12. Ibid. 1.2.32.
13. Ibid. 1.2.64.
14. Ibid. VI. 3.79.

The Milindapañha also refers to Brahmins engaged in teaching. In the story of Nāgasena, a Brahmin teacher is requested by the father of the student, "O Brahmin, please teach the Vedas to Nāgasena."[1] At another place a Brahmin is defined as one who studies and teaches others; who accepts alms; who restrains his senses; who develops self-control; who is wedded to duty; and who maintains the high ideals of the family."[2] This Buddhist text also mentions the qualities necessary for a teacher and his pupil[3] and refers to hardships of student-life.[4] Thus both the Brahmanical and Non-Brahmanical sources agree in depicting the Brahmins as the custodians of learning.

(iii) Working as Priests : The third principal means of subsistence for a Brahmin was to conduct sacrifices for others,[5] excluding the Śūdras.[6] The Brahmiñ, so engaged, received his fee at the successful completion of a sacrifice.[7] Different objects are prescribed for different sacrifices and their payment is made obligatory under pain of severe retribution.[8] In addition to the fees, the shares of different priests are also set out. For example, the four chief priests, out of a total of sixteen, receive half of the total fee and so on.[9] Manu gives many more details in this connection.[10]

Fines are prescribed in case a sacrificing priest abandons the sacrifice before completion or does not start it, having agreed to do so, etc.[11] If, however, such a person gets contaminated by a grievous crime, then he has to be turned away without

1. *Milindapañha*. I.22.
2. Ibid. 4.5.27.221.
3. Ibid. p.94.
4. Ibid, I, p. 315, *Mahāvagga*. 1.25-26.
5. *Manu*. 10.74.
6. Ibid. 3.178.
7. *Manu*. 11.38; 8.209. According to Manu a Brahmin who does not give fee at the sacrifice becomes equal to one who has not kindled the sacred fire. A chariot, a horse, again a horse and a cart should be given to *Adhvaryu, Brahmā, Hotā*[1] and *Udgātā* respectively.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid. 1.210.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid. 8.206-208.

any risk[1].

Manu is alive to the need of cultivating good relations between the priest and the *Yajamāna* and gives it the name of *śravaṇa-sambandha*, this being treated on par with those of *artha*, *yoni* and *mukha* (*guru-mukha*).[2]

The Mahābhāṣya mentions the *Ṛtvik*[3] and the *Yajamāna*[4] a number of times as also the *Hotṛ*,[5] the *Udgātṛ*,[6] and the *Adhvaryu*.[7] The functions of these priests are described in the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, VII. 16. Besides, the *Potṛ*, the *Praśāstṛ*, the *Pratihartṛ* and the *Agnīdhra* are also referred to.[8] The dress of the priest consisted of a red turban and of a white robe.[9] For *dakṣiṇā* Patañjali talks of a gelded cow,[10] and says that the same cow could also pass as *dakṣiṇā* a thousand times.[11]

The Brahmins also acted as the royal priests (*Purohita*). Manu lays down, "Let him appoint a domestic priest (*Purohita*) and choose an officiating priest (*ṛtvij*); they shall perform his domestic rites and the (sacrifices) for which three fires are required.[12] Yājñavalkya enjoins, "He would appoint the *Purohita* who is an astrologer, who is highly exalted, who is well-versed in the theory of punishment, as well as in the *Atharvāṅgiras*."[13] The *Purohita* was sometimes appointed to be the prince's tutor or *guru* for instructing him in the śāstras and conducting the necessary rites upto *Cūḍā-karaṇa* (tonsure)[14] These law-givers make the Purohita an essential part of ancient

1. *Manu*. 8.388.
2. Ibid. 4.179.
3. *Mahābhāṣya*. 1.1.49, p, 119.
4. Ibid. I. 1.27, p. 86.
5. Ibid. II, 2.49, p. 486.
6. Ibid. II, 1.1., p. 372.
7. Ibid. II, 4.1., p. 372.
8. Ibid. II, 2.49, p. 486.
9. Puri, op. cit., p. 168.
10. *Mahābhāṣyā* III. 2.38, p. 125. *Mahānirasto dakṣiṇā dīyate.*
11. Ibid. 1.1.2., p. 17. *Sahasrakṛtva-dattvatayā sarve to sahasradakṣiṇaḥ sampannāḥ.*
12. *Manu*, 7.78.
13. *Yāj*. I. 313.
14. *Manu*. 2.140; *Yāj*. 1.34; *Buddhacarita*. 1.50.

Indian polity. They (*Purohitas*) advised the king's physician at the time of illness of the king. Thus he was indirectly entrusted with the work of safeguarding the life of the king against any attempt on the part of the physician to cause the king's death.[1]

(*iv*) *Śrāddha* : Brahmins were fed at the *Śrāddha.* Manu ordains that two or three Brahmins must be fed at the offerings to the gods or manes respectively. On these occasions one may feed one Brahmin but in any case a large company of the Brahmins should not be entertained.[2] According to Manu such a company destroys these five (advantages) : the respectful treatment (of the invited), (the propriety of) place and time, purity and (the selection) of virtuous Brahmins (guests).[3] A great reward accrues from feeding the worthy *śrotriya* alone.[4] Manu enjoins the sacrificer to enquire about the ancestors and about the learning of Brahmins whom he wants to feed, for such Brahmins procure a great reward as guests.[5] It is declared that "As many mouthful as an ignorant man swallows at a sacrifice to the gods, or to the manes, so many red hot spikes, spears and iron balls must (the giver of the repast) swallow after death."[6] At the rite sacred to gods one may not enquire regarding an invited Brahmin but he must make enquires and carefully examine (the qualities and parentage of) the guests.[7] Manu gives a long list of persons who should be invited at all. These rules mostly agree with that of the Dharmasūtras.[8]

(*v*) *Brahmin-Judges* : Normally the king used to preside over the law-courts, assisted by Brahmins and experienced councillors.[9] Manu and other law-givers advise a king to

1. Suśruta, *Sūtrasthānam. Ad.* 34.8, p. 118.
2. *Manu.* 3.125; *Yāj.* I. 227-28.
3. Ibid. 3.126.
4. Ibid. 3.128-29; 3.131-32.
5. Ibid. 3.130.
6. Ibid. 3.33.
7. Ibid. 3.149.
8. Ibid. 3.134-167; *Yāj.* 1.219-225.
9. Ibid. 8.1; Ibid. II. 1-3; *Brh.* 1.65.

appoint a learned Brahmin to hear the suits in his absence.[1] He (the Brahmin judge) was assisted by three councillors who were usually Brahmins well-versed in the Vedas.[2] Such a gathering was called a Sabhā.[3] It was the responsibility of the judge to do justice ; if he did not, the harm would come to him.[4] Manu lays down that a Brahmin who subsisted only by the name of his caste (*jāti*), or one who merely calls himself a Brahmin (though his origin be uncertain), may at the king's pleasure interpret the law, but never a Śūdra."[5] Further a judge should "examine the cases of suitors according to the order of the castes.[6]

Manu declares that if any doubt arises regarding the points of law, then the point which śiṣṭa Brahmins propound, shall doubtlessly have a legal force.[7] The *śiṣṭas* are defined by Manu as persons (Brahmins) who live in accordance with sacred law, have studied the Vedas together with its appendages, and are able to adduce proof perceptible by the senses from the revealed texts"[8]. Whatever an assembly consisting either of at least ten, or at least three persons, following their prescribed occupations, declares to be law, the legal (force of) that one must not be disputed"[9]. A legal assembly (*Pariṣad*) consisted of ten members, including three, knowing the three principal Vedas, a logician, a Mīmāṁsaka, an expert in Nirukta, an expert in the Dharmaśāstra and three persons belonging to first three stages of life.[10]

OTHER MEANS OF LIVELIHOOD :

(*i*) *Gleaning of corns* : In the absence of any other means

1. *Manu.* 8.9.
2. Ibid. 8.11,
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid. 8.12.
5. Ibid. 8.20; *Kat.* 67.
6. Ibid. 8.24.
7. Ibid. 12.108.
8. Ibid. 12.109.
9. Ibid. 12.110-11.
10. Ibid. 12.111-12.

of subsistence a Brahmin should (rather) glean ears of grains from (the field of) any (man); gleaning of ears is better than accepting gifts; picking up of single grain is declared to be still more laudable.[1]

(ii) Occupations in distress : In the time of distress a Brahmin could adopt the avocations of a Kṣatriya or a Vaiśya.[2] A Brahmin could employ himself in agriculture and rearing cattle.[3] But both the Brahmin and the Kṣatriya are advised by Manu to avoid the persuit of agriculture (which causes) injury to many living beings and implies dependence on others.[4] A Brahmin may sell for gain the commodities sold by Vaiśyas except those mentioned below : condiments of all sorts, cooked food, sesame seed, stones, salt, cattle, human beings, all dyed cloth, cloth made of hemp, flax, or wool, even if not dyed, prints, roots, medical herbs, water, weapons, poison, meat, soma, perfumes of all kinds, flesh, fresh milk, sour milk, honey, clarified butter, oil-wax, sugar, and *kuśa* grass.[5] It was believed that, "By selling flesh, salt and lac a Brahmin at once becomes an outcaste; by selling milk he becomes (equal to) a śūdra in three days"[6]. And if a Brahmin willingly sells the forbidden commodities, he becomes a Vaiśya after seven nights.[7] Manu allows the barter of "condiments for condiments, though not of salt, of cooked food for (other kinds of)

1. Ibid. 10.112; *Yāj* 2.10.4-5. According to Yājñavalkya (1.128)gleaning of corns in the field and taking things that belong to nobody are lawful not only for the Brahmins but also for all twice-born men."
2. Ibid. 10.81-82; Ibid. 3.35. Yājñavalkya enjoins that having tided over the distress, he shell purify himself by expiations and confine himself to his own path.
3. Ibid. 10.81-82.; Ibid. 3.36-44.
4. Ibid. 10.83; Ibid. 3.36-38; Nārada Purāṇa 61-106, gives a long list of such articles,
5. Manu. 10.85-88.
6. Ibid. 10.92; *Yāj*. 3.40. Manu (11.12) and Yājñavalkya (3.265) prescribe cāndrāyaṇa and other prāyaścittas (expiations) for it. Nārada Purāṇa 67 allows a king to levy a heavy fine on a Brahmin indulging in the sale of forbidden articles and thus straying from right path in the absence of distress.
7. Ibid. 10.93.

cooked food and of sesamum seeds for grains in eqaul qualities.[1] In case a Brahmin is unwilling to adopt the mode of life ordained for a Vaiśya and suffers the pangs of hunger he may accept (gifts) from any body;[2] for according to law, it is not possible (to assert) that anything pure can be sullied.[3] He incurs no sin and remains as pure as fire and water by teaching, by sacrificing for, and by accepting gifts from even despicable men.[4] A starving Brahmin *snātaka* or one in need of utensils made of common metal or of other property should seek the king's help. If the latter does not oblige the *Snātaka* must abandon his domain.[5] Manu also envisages a situation of distress for persons of other higher *Varṇas* and allows them a change of occupation under similar circumstances.[6]

Receiving interest on money : In addition, the Brahmin is also allowed to practice usury, in times of distress. But he is enjoined to levy a very low rate.[7] Manu says, "Just two in the hundred, three, four and five (and not more), he may take as monthly interest according to the order of *Varṇas*"[8].

Accepting of Śūdra's food : In normal conditions a Brahmin was allowed to eat cooked food given by a Śūdra who performs no *Śrāddha* but on the failure of (other) means of subsistence he may accept raw (grains) sufficient for one night (and day).[9] It is implied here that he may accept uncooked food from a Śūdra who performs *Śrāddha*. Manu lays down

1. *Manu*. 10.94; Yāj. 3.39; Nār. Purāṇa. 66. According to Nārada sesame may be bartered for medicine.
2. Ibid. 10.101, Ibid. 1.36-44.
3. Ibid. 10.102.
4. Ibid. 10.103.
5. Ibid. 10.113.
6. Ibid, 10.95-99; 116. *Yāj*. 3.36-44.
   Yājñavalkya (3.36-44) adds to Manu's list : carrying paddy on carts, taking fare, using and selling grass and wood from hills, living in land covered with wood and water, taking protection under the king and alms-begging.
7. *Manu*. 10. 117.
8. Ibid. 8.142. Manu (11.193-94) lays down that after distress the Brahmin must purify himself by performing a penance and surrendering the wealth thus acquired.
9. Ibid. 4.223.

that a Brahmin must never eat at a sacrifice that is offered by one who is not a *śrotriya*, by one who sacrifices for a multitude of men, by a women or by a eunuch.[1] Manu enumerates a number of things which cause the untimely death of the Brahmin.[2]

LOW OCCUPATIONS :

Besides these professions, the Brahmins followed various other avocations normally the preserve of the lower Varṇas. They acted as physicians, temple-priests, meat-sellers, traders (of prohibited articles), loyal servants, cattle breeders, dancers, sellers of spirituous liquor, bards, oilmongers, archers, gamblers, carriers (of load), toddy vendors, trainers of elephants, horses, bulls, camels, astrologers, teachers of the art of war, architects, royal soldiers, hunters, farmers, and soma-sellers.[3] The Mahābhāṣyakāra also refers to the varied low occupations followed by the people. At one place he mentions two Brahmins engaged in cutting wood and *Vala* who were therefore called *Kāṣṭhbhidbrāhmaṇa* and *Ṿalabhidbrāhmaṇa.*[4] Obviously all the Brahmins could not have the possibility of working as priests, teachers, etc, and many among them must have been obliged to seek their living by other means, such as those mentioned above.

(*d*) *Soldiery* : Here we may add a word or two regarding the profession of soldiery. Manu expressly permits Brahmins as well as Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas[5] to take up arms in self-defence or in defence of women and Brahmins, or to prevent the violation of their own duties and to ward off destruction at the hands of the members of the three upper *Varṇas.* Even killing in such circumstances, Manu emphatically declares, is no sin.[6]

1. Manu. 4.225.
2. Ibid. 5.5.21.
3. Ibid. 5.152-180.
4. *Mahābhāṣya.* 3.4.1.68; *Buddhacarita,* 1.31. Here we are told that Brahmin astrologers were present at the time of the birth of the Buddha.
5. *Manu.* 8.348-49.
6. Ibid.

This implies that in normal conditions a Brahmin should not take to arms. Patañjali refers to two terms, the village or town (*Janapada*) of the Brahmins viz., *Brāhmaṇaka* and *Frāhmaṇakīya*,[1] explained in the commentary, pradīpa as follows: *Brāhmaṇaka* is the village or town where Brahmins wield weapons, that is of Brahmins earning their livelihood by arms.[2]

SOCIAL POSITION

It should be noted that the immunities and privileges of the Brahmins as stated by Manu are not substantially different from those contained in the Sūtra works. The rational attitude of Kauṭilya towards the Brahmins that we have seen in previous chapter is nowhere to be seen in the law code of Manu.

(*i*) *Respect of the Brahmin* : Manu accords a very high and respectable position to the Brahmins in society. The Brahmin is said to be the master of all the *Varṇas* due to his pre-eminence, due to the superiority of his origin, due to his observance of certain restrictive rules and because of the special sanctity attaching to his person.[3] At one place he is described as the lord of the whole world;[4] at another he is raised to the status of a deity.[5] Manu declares "A Brahmin, be he ignorant or learned is a great divinity, just as fire, whether carried forth (for the offering of oblations) or not carried forth, is a great divinity." A Brahmin is said to be like "the brilliant fire which does not contaminate even in cremation, and which burns with equal brilliance when presented with oblations'.[6] Therefore, even though Brahmins employ themselves in all (sorts of) mean occupations, they

1. *Mahābhāṣya*. 4,2,2.123. p. 193.
2. Predīpa on Mahābhāṣya, 4.2.2.123; p, 193.
   Brāhmaṇāḥ āyudhajīvino yatra deśe
   tasminnarthe Brāhmaṇakaḥ śabbo nipātitaḥ.
3. *Manu*, 10.3.
4. Ibid. 9.245.
5. Ibid. 9.317.
6. Ibid. 9.318.

must be honoured in every way; for each of them is a great deity."[1] A person desirous of prosperity, never despises a learned Brahmin,[2] because if disrespected, the Brahmin can destroy the other.[3] Elsewhere we read that "a Brahmin should always fear homage like poison and constantly seek to suffer scorn as if it were nectar."[4] This was probably a means of countering any feeling of arrogance, that was likely to arise.

Even in the *Suśruta-Saṁhitā*, a treatise on medicine, great respect is shown to a Brahmin. It says that a patient suffering from tuberclosis can be cured by the worship of the Brahmin physicians, gods, elders and also by listening to the auspicious teachings of the Brahmins.[5] The worship of the Brahmin is enjoined at many places in this work.[6] Right from the first day of conception a pregnant woman should worship the Brahmins, the gods and the *gurus*.[7] Moreover words uttered by a Brahmin would bring prosperity to men.[8] The king Śuddhodana entrusted the performance of japa to a Brahmin, well-versed in the Vedas, for the prosperity and peace of his subjects.[9] The *Kāma-sūtra* refers, several times, to Brahmins, receiving homage. Blessings pronounced by them were thought to bestow long life.[10] It also lays down that the medicine approved by friends and Brahmins should be taken for recovering health or restoring vigour.[11] Due to their honoured position, the Brahmins enjoyed the right of entering the royal harem and also of conversing with the ladies therein separated by a screen.[12]

1. *Manu.* 9.319.
2. Ibid. 4.135.
3. Ibid. 4.136.
4. Ibid. 2.162.
5. Suśruta, *Uttaratantra*, 42-58. p. 692.
6. Ibid. Cikit. 29.12 p. 476; Sūtrasthānam. 6.20., p. 23.
7. Ibid. Śarīrasthānam, 10.3. p. 329.
8. Aśvaghoṣa, *Saundarananda*, 1.44.
9. Ibid. Suśruta, Sūtra. 28.5, p. 103.
10. *Kāmāsūtra.* VII. ii. 51.
11. Ibid. VII. i. Su. 51.
12. Ibid. V.6, Su. 1.

(*ii*) *Brahmin on the Road* : Among persons entitled to the right of way, the Brahmin snātaka has precedence even over the king.[1] Nārada lays down that when nine or seven persons meet they should first make room for the Brahmin to pass by.[2] They enjoyed the right of free access to the houses of other people for begging sake.[3]

(*iii*) *Exemption from taxes* : (*a*) Brahmins were also exempted from taxes. Manu declares that though dying (from want) a king must not levy taxes on *Śrotriyas* residing in his kingdom, better die of hunger.[4] He also adds, "Thanks to the religious merit he accumulates every day, a *Śrotriya* adds to the longevity of life, wealth and domains of the king, whose subject he be."[5] Alongwith the *Śrotriyas* exempted from taxes even the benefactors of these latter were left tax-free As regards toll charges, the Brahmins are included among those not liable to pay ferry-toll.[6]

(*b*) *Tax on Business* : This special treatment of the Brahmin is found even in matters concerning tax on business. Bṛhaspati declares that a Śūdra partner in business should pay 1/6 of the profit to the king, a Vaiśya 1/9th, a Kṣatriya 1/10th but a Brahmin only 1/20th part of his share.[7]

(*c*) *Rate of interest* : The law books also refer to an old provision prescribing different rates of interest for four *varṇas*.[8] However, Yājñavalkya adds that whatever is agreed upon by many should be paid as interest.[9]

(*iv*) *Treasure-trove* : Treasure-trove, if discovered by the Brahmins, belonged entirely to them;[10] in other cases it belonged to the king,except a sixth or twelfth part was given to the finder

1. *Manu. S.* 2.138-39; *Yāj.* I·117.
2. Nārada, *Prakīrṇaka*, verses 35-39.
3. Ibid.
4. *Manu.* 7.134.
5. Ibid. 7.136.
6. Ibid. 8.407.
7. *Bṛh.* XIII. 16.
8. *Yāj.* II. 37.
9. Ibid. II. 38.
10. *Manu. S.* 1.37; *Yāj.* II. 34-35; *Nār.* VII. 6-7.

if he honestly informed the king about it.[1] If a king were to discover any old treasure buried underground only one-half would go to the royal exchequer and the other half would be distributed among Brahmins.[2]

(*v*) *Expounder of Duties* : Again Brahmins were the expounders of duties of other castes. They knew the proper means of subsistence for the castes and declared them to the people, who were asked to abide by their duties. The king was also asked to rule according to their directions.[3]

(*vi*) *State-Help* : In addition to other sources of income, the Brahmins enjoyed the privilege of receiving state income from fines[4] and a part of the wealth received by the king as present.[5] Manu enjoins a king to ascertain the needs of Brahmins and check it that no Brahmin suffered from the pang of hunger.[6]

(*vii*) *Brahmin's superiority* : Manu declares that prosperity in this world and the next, flows from the union of Brahmins and Kṣatriyas. But as regards their mutual relationship,[7] Manu clearly ascribes superiority to the Brahmins, for he states that the Kṣatriyas sprang from the Brahmins.[8] Here he follows an old Upaniṣad.[9]

Manu thinks that because of his superior spiritual power, the Brahmin is capable of ensuring his own protection,[10] thanks to the magical hymns of the Atharvaveda.[11] These hymns are his weapons.[12] The basic qualification of a royal priest, therefore, consisted of mastery of Atharvan incantations.[13]

1. Manu. 8.35.
2. Ibid. 8.38.
3. Ibid. 10.2.
4. Ibid. 9.323.
5. Ibid. 11.4.
6. Ibid. 11.21-22.
7. Ibid. 9.322.
8. Ibid. 9.320-21.
9. *Br. Up.* 1.4.11; 15.
10. *Manu. S.* 11.32.
11. Ibid. 11.33.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.

THE BRAHMIN AND LAW :

Capital Punishment : As a rule the Brahmins were exempted from capital punishment.[1] At the most they could be banished[2] for a great crime with their properties intact and bodies unhurt.[3] Sometimes the Brahmins were branded and fined for certain offences.[4] Kātyāyana provides even death sentence for a Brahmin if he happens to be guilty of destroying foetus, or of theft, or of striking a Brahmin woman with a weapon or of killing an innocent woman.[5]

Security of Life :

For Manu and other law-givers, the slaying of a Brahmin is one of the worst sins.[6] Manu prohibits (violence to one's teacher, one's elders, Brahmins, kine and persons engaged in austerities.[7] As regards Brahmin-killing, there can be no expiation thereof, if done with intent.[8] Extremely low states of birth (as a pig, a dog, an ass, etc.) are fore-told for such murderers.[9] The only exception is made in the case of a Brahmin coming as an *ātatāyin*.[10] Even here, all

1. Manu. 8.380; Mitākṣarā on Yājñavalka II.4., lays down that a Brahmin offender should not be wipped, fattered, mutilated fined with money, driven out of the village or country, censured, or abondoned. But this applies only to a deeply learned Brahmin.
2. Ibid. 8.379; Mit. on Yāj. II. 270 ordains that instead of capital punishment the Brahmin offender should be shaved off the head, banished from the town, branded on the forehead and made to ride on an ass.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid. 8.378-81, 383-85.
5. Kāt. quoted by Viśvarūpa on Yāj. II. 281.
6. *Manu. S.* 9.225, *Yāj.* III. 227.
7. Ibid. 4.162.
8. Ibid. 11.89.
9. Ibid. 12.55.
10. Ibid. 8.350; Mita. on Yāj. II. 21. Even this exception is sought to be watered down later on. Mitākṣarā reduces it to an *Arthavāda* and says, "The real purport of the above-mentioned rule is not to enjoin that a Brahmin must be killed if he is an *ātatāyin* but to lay down

ātatāyins are not exempt from the basic protection of non-killing.[1] Kātyāyana would like a Brahmin learned in the Vedas, etc., togo scot free, even if he be an *ātatāyin*.[2] Bṛhaspati allows the merit of an *aśvamedha* sacrifice to any one who avoids the slaying of such a Brahmin.[3]

Coming back to the question of the un-intentional killing of a Brahmin, Manu prescribes certain expiatory rites for the same.[4] A slayer of a Brahmin should make a hut in the forest and dwell there for twelve years subsisting on alms and making the skull of a dead man his flag.[5]

Preference is shown to a Brahmin, even when he is a slayer. Following the general dictum that a Brahmin must not be killed, a Brahmin assassin goes beyond the pale of death sentence Such a person should have the sign of a torso branded on his fore-head and be exiled from the kingdom.[6]

The penances for an unintentional murder by a Brahmin are correspondingly less severe. Manu ordains that he should give, in order to purify himself, one thousand cows and a bull.[7] Or he may perform the penance prescribed for the murderer of a Brahmin, lasting for three years, controlling himself, wearing his hair in a braid, staying far away from the village and dwelling at the root of a tree.[8] If a Brahmin kills a virtuous Vaiśya, he should perform the same penance, or give one hundred cows and one bull.[9] The general rule stated by Manu is that, 'One fourth (of the penance) for the murder of a Brahmin is prescribed for intentionally killing a Kṣatriya,

only an arthavāda (laudatory recommendation), the right meaning being that even a *guru* and a Brahmin who are most honoured and therefore not fit to be killed may have to be killed if they happen to *be ātatāyins* (then what of others ?)."

1. *Manu.* 8.350-51.
2. Kane, op. cit., Vol. I, p. II.
3. Bṛh. quoted in Sm. C. Vya. p. 315.
4. *Manu. S.* 11.73-82.
5. Ibid.
6. Idid. 9.232.
7. Ibid. II. 127.
8. Ibid. II. 128.
9. Ibid. II. 129.

one eighth for killing a Vaiśya : and one sixteenth for killing a virtuous Śūdra.[1]

Patañjali, for his part, feels that any one killing a Brahmin unintentionally is degraded to the position of a Śūdra.[2] He also lists Brahmin-murder among the Mahā-pātakas[3] and prohibits the slaying of even one who is a Brahmin only in name.[4]

Coming to the problem of purging the punishment, whereas members of other *Varṇas* are required to purge their fines with physical labour if unable to pay, the Brahmin is exempted from this provision as well.[5]

Punishment for rape or adultery : In this connection Manu declares, "A Brahmin who carnally knows a guarded Brāhmiṇī against her will, shall be fined one thousand (*paṇas*) but he shall be made to pay five hundred, if he had a connexion with a willing one".[6] And 'if a Brahmin has intercourse with a guarded female of those two (castes), he should be compelled to pay a fine of one thousand (paṇas).[7] But, "A Brahmin who approaches unguarded females of the Kṣatriya or Vaiśya castes five hundred (*paṇas*); but for intercourse with a female of the lowest castes one thousand".[8] Here we see that the maximum fine is levied on a Brahmin who offends against a woman of lower caste. If a Brahmin dallies with a Vṛṣalī for a night, he removes that sin in three years, by subsisting on alms and by daily muttering sacred texts.[9] If a Kṣatriya or a Vaiśya has connexion with an unguarded Brāhmaṇī, let him fine the Vaiśya five hundred (*paṇas*) and the Kṣatriya one thousand.[10] But even these two, if they offend a Brāhmaṇī not only guarded but even the wife of a prominent man, shall

1. *Manu.* II. 126.
2. *Mahā. Bhāṣ.* 1.1.1. p. 28, yo hy ajānan [Brāhmaṇīm hanyat... so'pi manye patitaḥ asti.
3. Ibid. 6.1.4. "Brāhmaṇavadhe surāpāne ca mahān doṣa uktaḥ."
4. Ibid. II. 1.2 3., p. 92; 6.1.4.84.
5. *Manu.* 9.229; *Kāt.* 479-80.
6. Ibid. 8.378.
7. Ibid. 8.383
8. Ibid. 8.385.
9. Ibid. 11.179.
10. Ibid. 8.376.

be punished like a Śūdra or be burnt in a fire of dry grass.[1] Thus we have seen that the offences against Brahmins were sought to be punished with more severity than those committed against other classes.

Witness : Manu allows the member of the four *Varṇas* and the lowborn men to act as witnesses in the transactions of their respective communities.[2] Kātyāyana declares that a litigant of a lower *Varṇa* should not be cited as witness by a person of a higher *Varṇa* to prove his case.[3] But Nārada allows the members of all the *Varṇas* to appear as witnesses in the cases of all the *Varṇas*.[4] In the cases of adultery, theft and assault any body could act as a witness.[5] Laying down the qualifications of the witnesses Manu says that, trustworthy men of all the four castes (*Varṇas*) may be made witnesses in law suits, free from covetousness; but let him reject those of an opposite character"[6]. In addition to it Bṛhaspati enjoins that witnesses should belong to respectable families and regularly perform religious rites prescribed in the Vedas and Smṛtis.[7] Among those who are not permitted to appear as witnesses are (evidently in civil cases),a king, an artisan; a dancer, a *Śrotriya*, a Brahmacārin and an ascetic.[8]The reason stated by Kullūka is that as they are always occupied with their work and they have no time to spare and that they can easily be won over by bribery.[9] According to Nārada also a *Śrotriya* could never be cited as a witness by any litigant (even by a Brahmin litigant).[10] In the absence of qualified witnesses slaves and servants could act as witnessess.[11] Manu lays down that a judge should cause a Brahmin to swear by his veracity, a Kṣatriya by his chariot or

1. *Manu.* 8.377.
2. Ibid. 8.68; *Kat.* 348.
3. *Kāt.* 348.
4. *Nārada.* I.154.
5. *Yāj.* II. 72.
6. *Manu. S.* 8.63.
7. *Bṛhaspati.* V. 38.
8. *Manu. S.* 8.65.
9. Kullūka on Manu. S. 8.65.
10. Nārada, Ṛṇādāna 158.
11. *Manu. S.* 8.70.

the animal he rides on, a Vaiśya by his cattle and gold, and a Śūdra by imprecating on his head the guilt of all grievous sins.[1] The judge is asked to call upon the twice-born (witnesses), facing north or east, to give true evidence in the presence of (images of) the gods and of the Brahmins.[2] Let a judge examine a Brahmin (beginning with) 'speak', a Kṣatriya (beginning with) 'Speak the truth'; a Vaiśya (admonishing him) by (mentioning) his kine, grain and gold, a Śūdra (threatening him) with the guilt of every crime that causes loss of caste"[3]. A judge should treat like Śūdras the Brahmins who tend cattle, who trade, who are mechanics, actors or singers, menial servants or usurers.[4] Perhaps the reason for this mignt have been the same as stated by Kullūka on Manu (8.65).[5] Manu sees no harm in uttering a lie as when the speaking of a truth would cause death to a Śūdra, a Vaiśya, a Kṣatriya, or a Brahmin.[6] Again Manu declares that one does not lose caste if by swearing falsely some favour is shown to a Brahmin.[7] He has prescribed a general rule that in case of giving false evidence, the king should fine and banish men of three lower castes, but should only banish a Brahmin.[8] In these and similar rules one may find the formulation of two blocks i e. the Brahmin-block on one side and a block of Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras on the other.[9] Yājñavalkya prescribes the ordeal of fire, water or poison for a Śūdra and that of the balance for a Brahmin.[10] Nārada, Bṛhaspati and Kātyāyana lay down that a Brahmin should be tested by the balance, a Kṣatriya by fire, a Vaiśya by water, and a Śūdra by poison.[11] But here again a general rule is formulated according to which all ordeals

1. *Manu. S.* 8.113; Nār. I. 199.
2. Ibid. 8.87.
3. Ibid. 8.88.
4. Ibid. 8.102.
5. Kullūka on Manu. 8.65.
6. *Manu. S.* 8.104.
7. Ibid. 8.112.
8. Ibid. 8.123.
9. Sharma (R.S.), *Śūdras*, op. cit., p. 190.
10. *Yāj.* II.98.
11. Nārada 1.334-35; Bṛ. VIII. 12; Kāt. 422.

can be administered to members of all *Varṇas*, except the ordeal of poison which cannot be administered to the Brahmin.[1] But no such ordeal is prescribed by Manu.

Hearing of the cases : The King is directed by Manu to take up the case of litigants in order of their *varṇas*[2]. Further, he should take into account the customs of every *varṇa* while deciding the cases;[3] the conduct of those persons who abided by law and were learned, was regarded as the source of law[4]. According to Kātyāyana on failure to provide surety in the law-suits, a twice-born person should be merely guarded by the warders but Śūdras and others should be kept confined and fettered.[5] But he provides the same fine of eight *paṇas* for those who break the rule and run away.[6] During the period of their detention, however, there should be no obstruction to the performance of their daily obligatory rites in the case of virtuous members of the four varṇas.[7]

Defamation : The defamation of one caste by the other was considered a crime punishable under law. Thus if a Kṣatriya defames a Brahmin, he shall be fined a hundred *paṇas*, a Vaiśya 150 or 200 *paṇas* but a Śūdra shall suffer a corporeal punishment.[8] But, in case a Brahmin defames a Kṣatriya, a Vaiśya or a Śūdra, he shall be fined respectively 50, 25, 12 *Paṇas*.[9] But Bṛhaspati adds that it applies only to the cases of virtuous Śūdras; no offence is imputable for abusing a Sūdra devoid of virtue.[10] 'The fact', says Sharma, 'that a fine of 12 *paṇas* is prescribed in the case of a Śūdra is significant, for in the Gautama Dharmasūtra no fine is provided in such a case."[11] This definitely points to the change in the position of the

1. *Kātyā. S.* verse 422.
2. *Manu. S.* 8.24.
3. Ibid. 8.41.
4. Ibid. 2.6.
5. *Kār.* 118.
6. Ibid. 119.
7. Ibid.
8. *Manu.* 8.267.
9. Ibid. 8.268; Nārada. Vākpāruṣya, verses 15-16; *Yāj.* II. 206-7.
10. *Bṛh.* XX. 13.
11. Sharma R.S. : *Śūdras*, p. 190.

Śūdras in Indian society.

Insult : Manu, Nārada and Bṛhaspati prescribe very harsh punishment for a Śūdra who offends persons of the higher *varṇa*.[1] If a Śūdra even mentions the name and the caste of the twice-born man contemptuously, 'an iron nail ten finger long, shall be thrusted into his mouth.[2] And if he insults a twice-born with gross invective, he shall have his tongue cut off, for he is of low origin.'[3] The term twice-born ((*dvijāti*) indicates only the Brahmins and the Kṣatriyas, for this punishment is clearly forbidden in the case of a Śūdra reviling a Vaiśya.[4] If he becomes arrogant enough to teach the Brahmin his duties[5] "the king shall cause hot oil to be poured into his mouth and also into his ears." Bṛhaspati considers pratilomas and the antyas (untouchables) as highly degraded persons. If they happen to offend against Brahmins, they should be beaten and never amerced in a fine.[6] Yājñavalkya declares that if a non-Brahmin causes pain to a Brahmin, he shall be deprived of his limb. But Yājñavalkya has not given any indication suggesting that this rule applies only to a Śūdra.[7]. In the very next rule the same author prescribes that if both parties threaten with arms, the punishment shall be the same to all.[8] So in the case of mutual assault there is no brace of *varṇa* distinction. Jayaswal suggests that these rules were framed with a view to counter the Buddhist or Jaina Śūdras who preached dharma and who claimed equality with higher *Varṇas*.[9] On the other hand, Aiyanger opines that these are directed against those who flout the established order.[10] Were these rules actu-

1. *Manu*. 8.271, *Nār*. XV. 22, 23-25, 26-28. *Bṛh*. I1. 37.
2. *Manu*. 8.271. The term dvijāti is explained by Kull. as 'Brāhmaṇa and others', but probably it refers to Brāhmaṇa alone.
3. Ibid. 8.270.
4. Ibid. 8.277
5. Ibid. 8.272.
6. *Bṛh*. IX.18.
7. *Yāj*. II.215.
8. Ibid. II. 216.
9. K.P. Jayaswal : *Manu and Yājñavalkya*, p. 150.
10. Rangaswami Aiyangar (K.V.) : *Aspects of the political and Social System of Manu*, p. 132.

ally in force is yet to be seen. Basham calls them the suggestions of a fanatic which were rarely if ever put into practice.[1]

Fines for abusing : Manu lays down a general rule saying, 'For offences of twice-born men against those of equal caste (*Varṇa*) the fine shall be also twelve (paṇas) : for speeches which ought not to be uttered fine shall be double."[2] For mutual abuse 'by a Brahmin and Kṣatriya a fine must be imposed by a discerning (King), on the Brahmin the lowest amercement, but on the Kṣatriya the middlemost."[3]

(*i*) *Assault on a Brahmin* : Even harsher and sometimes unspeakable punishments are prescribed by Manu for Śūdras who assault or hurt a member of the higher *Varṇa.*[4]

"A person who hurts or strikes a Brahmin will get punishment not only here but also in the other world. He who has struck a Brahmin even with a blade of grass, tied him by a neck with a cloth, or conquered him in an altercation shall appease him with a prostration."[5] "But on the other hand he who, intending to hurt a Brahmin has threatened (him with a stick and the like) shall remain in hell during a hundred years; he who actually struck him, during one thousand years."[6] Manu further declares thus "as many particles of dust as the blood of a Brahmin causes to coagulate, for so many thousand years shall the shedder of that blood remain in hell."[7] He has prescribed penances to atone for this sin. For threatening a Brahmin (the offender) shall perform a *Kṛchra*, for striking him an *Atikṛchra*, for shedding his blood a *Kṛchra* and *Atikṛchra.*[8]

1. Basham, *Wonder*, op. cit., p. 80.
2. Manu. S. 1.269.
3. Ibid. 8.276.
4. Ibid. 8.279-84; Kullūka on Manu 8.279. says that here the words *antyaja* and śreṣṭha denote a Śūdra and a Brahmin respectively.
5. Ibid. 11.205.
6. Ibid. 11.206.
7. Ibid. 11.207.
8. Ibid. 11.208.

Uttering of undesirable words for a Brahmin : Manu also says that he who has said 'Hum' to a Brahmin, or has addressed one of his betters with 'Thou' shall bathe, fast during the remaining part of the day and appease (the person offended) by a reverential salutation.''[1]

For a crime like spitting on a superior 'the king shall cause both his lips to be cut off, if he urines (on him), the penis, if he breaks wind (against him), the anus.'[2]

Sitting on an equal seat : Besides, if a men of the lowest birth (*apakṛṣṭajaḥ*) places himself on the exalted seat with a person of high caste (*utkṛṣṭaḥ*), he shall be branded on his lip and banished, or the king shall cause his buttocks to be gashed.[3]

Punishment for pretending to be a Brahmin : Manu provides the punishment of death for a Śūdra who pretends to be a Brahmin.[4] Yājñavalkya[5] declares that a Śūdra who pretends to be a Brahmin should be fined a sum of 800 *paṇas*.

Theft : The theft of a Brahmin's gold ranks among mortal sins.[6] It says that "a Brahmin who steals the gold of a Brahmin shall pass a thousand times through the bodies of spiders, snakes and lizards, of equatic animals and of destructive Piśācas".[7] Manu says that "he who steals gold (of a Brahmin) has diseased nails..."[8] It is very significant to note that Manu prescribes for this offence higher fines for the men of upper castes than that for the Śūdras.[9] Thus in a case of theft the guilt of a Brahmin is sixty-four fold, or quite a hundred fold, or (even) twice four and sixty fold

1. *Manu. S.*11.204.
2. Ibid. 8.282.
3. Ibid. 8.281.
4. Ibid. IX. 224.
5. *Yāj.* II. 304.
6. *Manu.* 9.235.
7. Ibid. 12.57.
8. Ibid. 11.49.
9. Ibid. 8 337-38. See also Nārada, Appendices 51 and 52. on theft. Kṛt. 485 provides that a Kṣatriya or a Brahmin should be awarded double the punishment which is provided for a Śūdra.

(each of them) knowing the nature of the offence.[1] If a Śūdra commits this crime, he had to pay eightfold of the goods stolen, a Vaiśya sixteenfold (of the goods stolen) and a Kṣatriya thirty-two fold.[2] It was also believed that, "a Brahmin seeking to obtain property from a man who took what was not given to him, is even like a thief"[3]. But if a Brahmin traveller who has nothing to eat, takes two sticks of sugar-cane or other vegetables from a field, he should not be punished for that act.[4] Another rule of Manu says that "a Brahmin who has stolen a piece of gold (belonging to a Brahmin) shall go to the king and confessing his deed say, 'Lord, punish me'.[5] According to the commentator Kullūka, the word Brahmin used here should be taken in the sense of 'men in general'[6]. The obvious reason for making this suggestion seems to be the next verse (11.100) which asks a king to strike the man with the same club which he must carry; by his death the thief becomes pure; or a Brahmin may purify himself by austerities.[7] If we do not interpret it in this way.this rule will go against the former injunction of Manu which says that the Brahmin must not be punished bodily.[8]According toManu a twice-born 'who desires to remove by austerities the guilt of stealing the gold (of a Brahmin) shall perform the penance (prescribed) for a slayer of a Brahmin, (living) in a forest and dressed in (garments made of) bark".[9] After this penance, he must give to Brahmins, learned in the Vedas, ten cows and a bull (or) if he does not possess (so much property), he must offer to them all he has".[10] The offender had to lose a part of his feet for stealing cows belonging to

1. *Manu. S.* 8. 337-38.
2. Ibid. 8.337-38.
3. Ibid. 8,340.
4. Ibid. 8.331.
5. Ibid. 11.90.
6. Ibid. (See Kullūka)--'Brāhmaṇa' grahaṇam manuṣyamātrapradarśanārtham."
7. Ibid. 11.1100.
8. Ibid. 8.380; 8.379.
9. Ibid. 11.101.
10. Ibid. 11.116.

Brahmins, for piercing (the nostrils of) a barren cow, and for stealing cattle (belonging to Brahmins).[1] *Kṛchra* penance for a full year is prescribed for a Brahmin who steals purposely the valuable property, grains or cooked food from the house of a caste-fellow.[2]

1. Manu. 8.325.
2. Ibid. 11.162.

5

Conclusion

The main phases in the development of the position of the Brahmins, during the period covered by us, can now be summarised. On entering India and after settling down here, the Aryans who had their groups of nobles and priests, must have also admitted some nobles and priests of the indigenous people into their respective folds. This hypothesis enables us to understand as to why some of the Vedic seers are declared as black in complexion and are also spoken of as low-born.

In all probability, in the society thus formed by assimilation, the function of an individual determined his *Varṇa* and not his birth. One could easily cross over to the priestly ranks from the noble ranks.

A Brahmin was one who composed and recited the *brahman* (prayers). Thanks, however, to the process of evolution the *varṇa*-system gradually changed and assumed its somewhat rigid form, depicted in the tenth maṇḍala of the Ṛgveda. This rigidity then goes on increasing (vide the later saṁhitās and Brāhmaṇa-texts). This literature (viz. the Atharvaveda and the Brāhmaṇas) puts Brahmins above all other social groups, making them superior to every one else. Wherever this superiority is contested the result is always in favour of the Brahmins. The Atharvaveda also contains nnmerous incantations which could ruin the king, if the priests were to recite them.

With sacrifices becoming more and more complex, the Brahmins acquire still greater prestige and power. They alone know the Veda and can conduct sacrifices. Thus they are both royal priests as also officiating priests at these sacrifices, which

become increasingly popular. Their services are also required by the king setting out to battle, because the royal priest prays for his victory. All this means still more power and privilege for them. As a rule, they are guaranteed freedom from bodily punishment, their property cannot be attached. The process of justice is thus sought to be made favourable to them in all respects.

In the post-Vedic literature, we can notice the increasing stiffening of the *Varṇa*-system. The *Sūtra*-texts clearly lay down that the Brahmin is superior to all, by his very birth in a Brahmin family. Other prerogatives are, now, also claimed. No one but a Brahmin could now officiate as a priest at a sacrifice. A distinction is sought for them in every thing. For instance, the age, the season, the dress, the girdle, the staff, etc. for the *Upanayana* of a Brahmin boy are different.

Beside, the *Sūtras* throw enough light on the obligations, the duties, the social position, etc, of the Brahmins. They were enjoined to perform three duties, i.e., study, performing sacrifices and giving gifts. For their subsistence they undertook teaching, officiating at sacrifices and receiving gifts. Rules are also prescribed for their subsistence in times of distress. In such circumstances, a Brahmin could live by other means, normally not open to him. The Buddhist and Jaina texts, however, present a somewhat different picture. They show the Kṣatriyas to be superior to Brahmins, although even they reflect the generally respected position held by the Brahmins in the society. As the two religions were against costly sacrifices where animals were slaughtered in large numbers, they condemned all those who were connected with them. The priests, being all Brahmins, are their main target. As against the *Varṇa* by birth rule, they seek to popularise the *Varṇa* by virtue precept. That is, while accepting the fourfold division, they seek to knock its bottom out. This, however, did not succeed.

As Kauṭilya was writing a manual of political statecraft and not a *smṛti*, he had to restrain his enthusiasm for Brahmin superiority to practicable limits. Although he yields place to no one in his admiration for the innate superiority of the Brahmin, he does not find it possible to give them dispropor-

tionate advantages. In addition to occupations enumerated above, the Brahmin is also employed as a royal envoy, as an astrologer; etc. In matters of law, he takes away their immunity from punishment in cases of rape, theft, murder, etc. In one case, he even prescribes capital punishment for the Brahmin. Nevertheless, the position of the Brahmin remains one of super-eminence in society.

This position might have received some setback during the ascendancy of Buddhism under Aśoka. But the Brahmin reaction was not long in coming. With Puṣyamitra inaugurating a Brahmin dynasty, the recovery of positions lost by Brahmins must have been rapid and their position must have become one of envy for all under the Guptas. This is reflected in the honours bestowed upon the Brahmins in the literature, especially the Smṛti-literature of this period. Rules regarding sacraments, etc. are a reflection of the honours bestowed upon them. They are the recepients of both social and legal privileges in equal measure.

Having thus reached the pinnacle of glory under the Guptas, they do not hesitate to proclaim that they are the *bhū-devas*, gods on earth. They continue to enjoy this position without any challenge for quite some time and remain incharge of India's moral and material well-being in many ways.

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Index

Ābhyudayika 111, 113
Abhiṣikta 90, 143
Abhikṛnddhavāgoraṇa 144
Abusing 175
Ācārya 10, 23, 71, 78, 79, 80, 81, 94 120, 138, 159, 162, 171, 185, 202
Ācariyabhāgam 82
Ācariya 80, 81, 122
Ācariyabhāgadāyaka, 82
Ācāryakaraṇa 80
Acchāvāka 31, 33, 44, 110
Actors 122
Ādāyī 41, 43
Adhvaryu 30, 31, 32, 33, 44, 98, 109, 110, 119, 204
Adhyāpaka 80
Āditya 15, 69
Adivāsa 5
Adultery 176
Agastya 88, 89
Agni 15, 19, 30, 31, 32, 35, 43. 58, 59, 63, 69, 110, 133, 136, 183
Āgnidha 31, 44
Āgnīdhra 30, 31, 32, 110, 204
Agnihotra 24, 43, 100, 197, 200
Agnihotra-rite 70
Agnives'ya 115
Agniṣṭoma 109, 110, 160, 198
Agnitīrtha 99
Āgnyupadhāna 197
Agrawala 80
Āhavanīya 69
Ahīna 109
Aiṇeyājina 75
Aitareya 15, 51, 68
Aitareya Brāhmaṇa 17, 26, 36, 37, 39, 40, 41, 43, 47, 49, 50, 204
Aiyanger 220
Ajātaśatru 18, 104, 125
Ākhyāyikās 160
Alms 10, 17, 23, 60, 76, 77, 86, 100, 102, 103, 159, 192
Atharvaveda 104
Altekar 70
Amacca 123, 124
Amātya 121, 165
Amāvasyā 113
Ambaṣṭha 89, 90, 93, 155, 133, 188
Ambassador 167
Anāmaya 192
Anantara 157
Aṇḍabhūta Jātaka 97
Aṅga 77, 117, 142, 162
Aṅgavidyā 90
Āṅgirasa 204
Āṅgirasa-family 11
Aṅgulīya 66
Aṅguttara Nikāya 60, 91
Aṅkana 142
Antarāla 93
Antarīya 64
Antelope 6
Antevāsī 80, 80
Antyas 192
Antyeṣṭi 98
Anūcānabrāhmaṇa 26
Anūcāna 77
Anuloma 87, 455
Anuśāsana 18
Anusociya Jātaka 91
Apakṛṣṭajaḥ 222
Apāṅkteya 113

Apapātra 194
Āpastamba 65, 69, 70, 73, 75, 78, 79, 88, 89, 96, 100, 108, 103, 107, 103, 117, 127, 130, 131, 131, 137, 143, 144, 145, 148, 146. 147, 150, 150
Āpāyī 41
Apte 106
Āpūpas 95, 140
Āpiśala 80
Āpri 32
Aptyoryāma 110
Ārāmas 81
Arca 53, 67
Architects 209
Argha 99, 138
Aristobulus 171
Armour 57
Arrian 171
Ārṣa 86, 154
Ārṣatīrtha 99
Ārṣeya 16, 37, 107
Arthaśāstra 155, 157, 159, 160, 163, 166, 168, 170. 172, 173, 174, 175
Aruṇeya 101
Ārya 99, 125
Aryan 3, 4, 5, 8, 11, 29, 61, 66, 67, 101, 151, 225
Aryan gods 4
Āryāvarta—100
Ārṣa 186
Asamāti 41
Asaṅga 11
Asavarṇa 155
Asitamṛgas 41
Āśrama 189
Aśoka 171, 172, 177
Aśvattha 15
Assemblies 9, 19, 20, 84
Astrology 133, 164, 185
Astrologers 166, 209
Astronomy 90
Āsura 67, 154, 186
Āśvalāyana, 72, 88, 89, 98, 99, 108, 109, 113, 115
Aśvadmedha 19, 30, 52, 55, 65, 110, 198, 215
Aṣṭādhyāyī 125
Aṣṭakas 95
Ātatāyin, 142, 143, 214, 215
Atharvaveda 4, 8, 10, 12. 14, 15, 22, 26, 34, 38, 46, 48, 53, 90, 162, 164, 184, 204, 213, 225
Atharvāṅgirasa vidyā 18
Athens 28
Atikṛchra, 137, 141, 221
Atithi 138, 191
Atka 6
Atkān 7
Ātman 79, 106
Atri 89
Atthadhammanuśāsaka 122
Atyagniṣṭoma 110
Aurva 41
Autumn 69, 74, 75
Āyajiṣṭha 32
Āyasa 110
Ayogava 93
Āyurveda
Bandhanamokkha-Jātaka 121
Barley 13, 14, 15, 94
Bālāki 22
Baudhāyana 65, 73, 74, 83, 85, 86, 88, 89, 90, 94, 97, 100, 111, 113, 114, 115, 120, 126, 127, 128, 130, 132, 135, 138, 139, 140, 142, 143, 144, 145, 148
Baudhāyana-pravarasūtra 88
Beasts 133
Beef 13, 14
Bhadrakālī 90
Bhagavant 53
Bhandarkar 104
Bhāradvāja 40, 72, 73, 74, 88, 89, 128,
Bhārgava 88, 91, 110
Bhāva 59
Bhārata 116 118
Bhṛgu 10, 102,
Bhṛūṇa 77
Bhūtavidyā 18
Birds 133,
Bloomfield 20

Brahma 1, 47, 48, 49, 50, 52, 57, 58, 65, 86, 88, 154
Brahmacarya 10, 60, 70, 71, 84, 99, 157
Brahmacārī 23, 96, 71, 77, 101, 159, 184, 217
Brahmajāti 56
Brāhmaṇāchaṁsī 110
Brahman-priest 38
Brahman-purohita 35
Brahma-putra 28
Brahma-ṛṣis 88
Brahmatīrtha 99
Brahmaveda 34
Brahmavidyā 71, 104
Brahman 1, 17, 29, 31, 32, 33, 34, 37, 44, 59, 77, 108, 109, 110, 181, 190
Brāhmaṇa 3, 6, 7, 11, 13, 19, 24, 87, 29, 30, 34, 35, 37, 52, 59, 51, 67, 71, 90, 99, 105, 106, 107, 125, 152, 225
Brāhmaṇakulam 184
Brāhmaṇācchaṁsin 31, 34, 44
Brāhmaṇa-Saṁghas 19
Brāhmaṇa-yājaka 107
Brahmin 1, 5, 9, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 36, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61. 62, 63, 64, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 80, 81, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 103, 104, 105, 107-111, 113-117, 119-225
Brāhmaṇī 92, 93, 156, 167, 188, 216
Brahminhood 1, 11, 53, 57, 91, 102, 107, 149, 154, 190
Brahmin-priest 26, 34, 37, 45, 111
Brahmodya 18, 19
Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad 52, 57, 70, 84, 104, 116, 149
Bṛhadratha 172
Bṛhaspati 15, 30, 31, 35, 50, 163, 185, 212, 215, 217, 218, 219, 226
Bṛhaspatisava 36, 102, 198
Buddha 59, 60, 68, 90, 98, 182
Bühler 189
Butcher 134, 201
Butter 13, 207
Caityas 162
Cakes 13
Cakra 7
Cakri 92
Caravans 134
Caṣakas 24
Caraṇas 10
Carpentry 38
Castes 179
Cāṇḍālas 58, 68, 91, 92, 93, 140, 145, 150, 152, 155, 157, 175, 188, 194, 197, 200
Cāṇḍāla-Brāhmaṇa 60
Cāndrāyaṇa 144
Caṅkī 80, 107, 142
Chariot 12, 41, 57, 64, 74, 90, 96, 97, 119, 127, 160, 217
Charmakāra 93
Charm 133
Chāndogyopaṇiṣad 58, 71, 142
Chamasādhvaryu 110
Citra 6
Cloak 6
Collectors 133
Complexion 4, 5
Comb 8
Commensality 139
Commanders 167
Cone 66
Corns 166
Councillors 173
Cow 14, 44, 57, 75, 84, 85, 117, 119, 126, 136, 146, 193, 215, 224,
Curds 14, 95, 96, 118
Cūcuka 93
Cūḍākaraṇa 68, 204
Daiva 18, 154, 186
Dakṣiṇā 21, 43, 44, 118, 119, 161, 204
Dancer 12

Darśa 197
Dass (S.K.) 73
Daśapeya 44
Dasyus 4, 61
Dāna 165
Dānastuti 43, 63
Dāsas 61
Dāsa Brāhmaṇa 133
Dāsī 11, 63, 64, 164,
Demons 3, 133, 162, 164
Deshmukha 4
Deussen 104
Deva 77, 99
Devabandhu 54
Devajanavidyā 18
Deva-pūjā 189
Deva-sama 60
Devatīrtha 99
Devayajña 198
Devabhāga 37
Devāpi 2, 25, 28, 30, 31, 32, 35, 37
Devatā 136
Devasvāmin 87
Dhammānuśāsika 82
Dhanadeva 198
Dhanvantari 108
Dhānas 140
Dharma 18, 78, 135, 176, 180
Dhikjāti 152
Dhīrāḥ 8
Dīgha Nikāya 5, 12, 64, 90, 132
Dīrghaśravas 45
Divodāsa 40
Divorce 156
Dog 58, 214
Dogma 25
Dravya 145
Dravyayajñas 21
Drāpi 6
Dreams 133
Dream-reading 134
Drekmeier 1
Dṛpta 22
Drum 12
Duties 16, 100, 185, 195, 213
Dutt (N.K) 18, 29
Dvija 23, 92, 116, 135, 139, 193, 200, 220
Ear-Ornaments 7
Ear-rings 65, 119
Earth 122
Ekāha 109
Ekasāla 83
Ekoddiṣṭa 111, 113
Elephant 44, 90, 160, 175, 209
Eṇa 75
Endogamy 187
Entertainment 12, 188
Envoy 167
Eupatridae 28
Fee 11, 159
Festivals 13
Fick 122
Fine 176
Fire 69, 208
Fish 134
Flesh 13
Flesh-eating 189
Flute (Vāṇa) 12
Food 13, 117, 188
Fortune-telling 133
Frogs 9
Fruit 129, 133, 169
Gambling 12
Gaṅgā 162
Garment 118, 189
Garnet 66
Gaupāyanas 41
Gautama 72, 86, 87, 88, 91, 92, 93, 94, 97, 99, 100, 116, 120, 126, 127, 128, 130, 137, 138, 140, 143, 146, 148, 149, 187, 219
Gazelles 189
Gandharva 154, 186
Gārgya 88, 104
Gāthā 18, 184
Gāyatrī 16, 67, 76
Geldner 30, 39,
Generals 167
Gentes 28
Ghoshal 42, 47, 48, 127
Ghost 133

Ghoṭamukha 86
Ghurye 153
Gifts 116, 117, 165, 166
Girdle 76, 184
Goat 13, 49, 75, 119, 130, 189
Gobhila 76, 88, 114
Godāna 119
Goghātaka 134
Gohā 96
Gold 6, 43, 44, 45, 65, 66, 117, 145, 218, 222
Golden-Chain 66
Gold-coin 24
Golden Crown 7
Gold-pieces 45
Gold-Mirror 44
Gold plate 44
Gold-wealth 44
Gopatha Brāhmaṇa 24, 34, 44, 47, 53
Gotra 10, 11, 87, 88, 102, 110, 128, 155, 191
Grass 129
Graiveyaka 66
Grāvagrabha 14
Grāvastuta 31, 33, 110
Guest 137, 138, 139
Guṇa 62
Guru 22, 79, 89, 119, 121, 155, 193, 202, 204, 211
Guru-dakṣiṇā 103, 120
Guru-Mukha 204
Hair-dressing 8
Haridrā 75
Harihara 85
Hariścandra 2, 47
Hariśipra 7
Haug 35, 41
Havi 110, 115
Head Ornaments 7
Heesterman 47
Heifers 130
Hell 87, 221
Hemanta 75
Herbs 129, 207
Hiddakasama 134
Hillebrandt 20, 26
Himsā 214
Hiraṇya 6, 8
Hiraṇyabāhu 7
Hiraṇyakarṇa 7
Hiraṇyakeśin 72, 75
Hiraṇya-pāṇi 8
Hiraṇya-śipra 7
Hiraṇya-Vartani 8
Honey 95, 118, 129, 133, 207
Hopkins 39, 104
Horse 48, 51, 90, 117, 118, 130, 175, 188, 209
Hotā 19, 30, 31, 32, 33, 35, 38, 44, 108, 109, 110, 119, 204
Householder 11, 186
Hunter 134, 207.
Icchānaṅgala 83
Ikṣvāku 4
Indo-Aryan 20, 25
Indra 3, 15, 34, 35, 85, 39, 40, 41, 54, 162
Informers 166
Iron 98 205, 230
Iśāna 85
Iṣṭis 197
Itarā 63
Itihāsa 18
Jagati 15, 79, 76,
Jaiminīya 72, 102, 107, 109
Jaiminīyopaniṣad Brāhmaṇa 29
Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa 29
Jain 83, 95
Jaivali 22
Jala Jātukarṇa 38
Janaka 18, 22, 24, 84, 104
Janamejaya 41
Janapada 83, 210
Japa 211
Jayswal 92, 128, 220
Jābāla 55, 171,
Jāmadagni 89
Jānussoṇi 69, 80
Jāti 56
Jinadatta 96
Jiyasattu 93
Joshi 63

Jotipāla 125
Judge 128, 206, 217, 218
Jyā 76
Kaccāra 59
Kaesaka Brāhmaṇa 129
Kahāpaṇas 117, 125, 142, 147
Kaitubha 107
Kamboja 67
Kane 104, 131
Kaṇva 5
Kapilakeśa 182
Karṇaśobhana 7
Karṇa Veṣṭaka 65
Karṇikā 66
Kaṭha Saṁhitā 17
Kāṭhaka 72, 75
Kaṭha Grhyasūtra 96
Kaṭhopaniṣad 84
Kaurava 83
Kauravāyaṇī 83
Kauravīya 83
Kauśikafamilies 2
Kauśika Sūtras 98
Kauṣītaki 107, 113
Kauṭilya 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 170, 171, 173, 177, 178, 210,
Kavaṣa 11, 16, 37
Kavi 19
Kaśyapas 41, 88, 89, 110
Kāśikā 124
Kapiśāyanī 97
Kākiṇī 116
Kaṁsa 115
Kāmasūtra 202, 211
Kāmya 113
Kaṇva 167, 130
Kāṣṭhabhidbrāhmaṇa 209
Kātyāyana 57, 84, 88, 106, 110, 214, 215, 217, 218
Kātyāyana Śrautasūtra 65
Keith 20, 22, 67, 104, 128
Khānughātasamā 133
Khattiyakuṇḍaggāma 83
Kosala 38, 71, 142
Kosambi 126
Kṛttikā 70
Kṛṣara 95
Kṛṣṇa 6
Kṛṣṇavarṇanārī 63
Kṣatra 36, 40, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52
Kṣatra vidyā 18
Kṣatriya 11, 12, 15, 16, 21, 22, 22, 28, 29, 37, 40, 42, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 57, 58, 61, 62, 58, 69, 70, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 88, 87, 89, 90, 92, 93, 94, 96, 99, 100, 102, 103, 104, 105, 107, 119, 120, 121, 133, 135, 138, 139, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 153, 155, 157, 171, 175, 176, 177, 179, 180, 181, 183, 185, 186, 188, 191, 192, 193, 199, 207, 209, 212, 213, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 223.
Kṣatriyahood 149,
Kṣatriya-yājaka 107
Kṣauma 75
Kuḍuba 158
Kuhaka 133
Kulas 10
Kula-Jātaka 91
Kurīra 6
Kuru 38
Kuru Pāñcāla Brahmin 24
Kuruśravaṇa 37
Kuśa 61, 76, 108, 194, 207,
Kuśala 192, 199
Kautsa 41
Kullūka 217, 218, 223
Kumba 7, 66
Kumbī 199
Kumbhīdhānyas 199
Kumbhakāras 90
Kuṇḍala 7
Kurugotra 83
Land 117, 133
Lalāṭikā 65
Lāpaka 133
Levi 66
Lizards 134

Lohitamaṇi 66
Lokāyata 196
Lower caste 175
Ludwig 20, 45
Lute 12
Macdonell 1, 3, 20, 22, 26, 27, 29, 31 104
Madhūka 66
Madhuparka 95, 109, 118, 189
Madhyamopaniṣad 161
Maghavans 20
Magic 4, 134
Magical mantras 38,
Magical Prayers 38,
Magician 2, 3, 4, 25
Magical Power 44
Magical rites 25
Magical spells 25
Mahābhārata 3, 84,
Mahābhāṣya 180, 181, 198, 204
Mahābhāsyakāra 209
Mahābhiṣeka 39, 40
Mahābrahma 59
Mahākacchapa 162
Mahāmattas 124
Mahānimitta 134
Mahāparinibbāṇasuttānta 124
Mahāpātakas 142, 143, 145, 216
Mahāśālabrahmins 129
Mahāsuta 129
Mahavīra 98, 102, 134, 153,
Mahāvrata 96
Mahesardatta 11, 123
Mahīdāsa 63, 187
Maireya 97
Maitreya 24
Maitrāyaṇī Saṁhitā 46, 53
Maitrāvaruṇa 81, 32, 44, 110
Majjhima Nikāys 86,
Maṇis 65
Mañjiṣṭha 75
Mantrins 126
Manu 63, 156, 170, 175, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 190, 192, 193, 194, 195, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 212, 213, 214, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222
Manusmṛti 132, 193
Marriage 11, 12, 186
Mauryan 154, 171, 179,
Māyā 161
Mayasukumāl 93
Max Weber 2, 3. 44,
Madhyaṁdina 161
Magadha 91, 92 125
Māla 7, 66
Māla bhari 66
Māṇḍavya Kumāra 115
Manas 44
Mānava 89
Māsika 111
Māsī Śrāddha 111
Masara 97
Māṣa 62
Mataṅga Jātaka 59, 115
Medicine 134, 211
Medicine men 3
Medicinal herbs 133
Meat 13, 95, 96, 129, 130, 158, 207, 209,
Megasthenes 157, 158, 159, 160, 165, 166, 171
Mehta 128
Merchants 129
Messengers 133
Milk 13, 14, 95. 98, 129, 207
Milindapañha 179, 182, 196, 203
Ministers 167
Mīmāṁsā 127
Mimāṁsaka 206
Mirror 133
Military 20
Mitra 57
Mookerji 153
Moon 10, 22, 193
Motwani 180
Mouse-craft 133
Mṛgaśīrṣa 70
Mṛtapās 194
Mudgu 93

Muir 1
Muṇḍakopaniṣad 70
Muni 61
Muñja 76
Naciketā 137
Nakṣatravidyā 18
Nandas 118
Narendra Dutt 131
Narahari 158
Nāgasena 196, 203
Nakha Pāṣaṇḍa 81
Nāmakaraṇa 68
Nārāśaṁsi 18, 43
Nārāyaṇa 87
Nārada 59, 212, 217, 218, 220
Nāvika 93
Nearchus 173
Nemittaka 133
Neṣṭhā 30, 31, 32, 44, 110,
Netā 33
Nectar 14, 211
Nighāta 144
Nighaṇṭu 197
Nidhi 18
Nippesika 133
Nirvāsitaśūdra 92, 194
Nirukta 127, 202, 206,
Niṣādas 90, 92, 134, 155,
Niṣka 7
Nīvi 5
Non-Aryan 2, 25, 47
Non-Aryan priests 4
Non-Brahmin 53, 91, 106, 127, 148, 149, 191, 201 202, 203.
Non-Kṣatriya 201
Nṛyajña 198
Non-śrotriya 115, 166
Non-śūdra 146
Nyocani 8
Nyagrodha 15, 76
Officiating priest 1
Oil 902, 207
Ointment 133
Oldenberg 31, 33, 35, 152
Om 61
Omens 133, 134
Om Prakash 13, 96
Opaśa 6
Opasada 101
Opium 129
Oracles 133
Ornaments 6, 8
Orthodox brahmanism 3
Ox 44, 119
Oxen 13, 130
Paiśāca 154, 186, 189
Padamūlika 128
Palāśa 76
Pañca-Mahāyajñas 198
Paṇas 159, 160, 161, 164, 166, 170, 175, 176, 177, 216, 219, 221, 222
Pandey 74
Pañcadaśa 14
Pañchaviṁśa 16, 29, 40, 41, 43, 47, 53, 55, 57
Pārabrahman 18
Parāśava 90
Paricārakasamā 133
Pargitar 2, 3, 7
Pariṣads 10, 84, 85, 86, 126, 127, 206
Pariśadbala 85
Pariṣadyas 85
Pariśruta 14
Parivrājakas 81, 159
Paramātman 196
Partihartā 31, 110
Pārvaṇa 113
Parvata 162
Paryāṇāhna 5
Pasenādi 142
Patañjali 62, 63, 67, 106, 179, 180, 181, 183, 184, 185, 190, 194, 196, 198, 199, 204, 210, 216
Patita 73, 117, 143, 200, 201
Paurohitya 109
Paurṇamāsa 197
Pādas 84, 197
Pada-pāṭha 80
Pādaka 80
Pāṇigrahaṇa 156
Pāṇini 59, 66, 67, 79, 80, 83, 84, 85, 92, 94, 107, 109, 125

Pāraskara 68, 72, 75, 85, 87, 135, 138, 155, 157
Pāṣaṇḍa 171
Pāṭaligāma 125
Pāṭha 80
Pāṭaliputta 86, 118, 125
Patra 119
Pāyasa 95
Perfumer 207, 208
Phālguna 70
Philosophers 19, 158, 165, 171
Physician 18, 96, 133, 205, 209, 211
Physical Features 4
Pigs 58, 141, 214
Piṇḍa 89, 111
Piṅgala 182
Pischel 35
Piṣṭakas 95
Pitra 18, 99, 130
Pitṛyajña 198
Plākṣa 15
Plaintiff 173
Potā 14, 30, 31, 32, 44
Poet 26, 28, 45
Poison 130, 133, 207
Pokkharasādi 101
Potdar 27, 204
Pradeep 210
Prajāpati 86, 159, 197
Prākṛit 68
Prāṇāyāma 141
Pravahaṇa 22, 190
Prastotā 31, 33, 44, 110
Praśastā 30, 32, 110, 204
Prastha 158
Pratardana 5, 40, 161
Pratisāra 7
Pratihartā 33, 110, 204
Pratiṣṭha 31, 33
Pratiloma 155, 187, 1
Pravara 11, 16, 88, 89, 110
Pravaktā 80
Pre-Aryan 3
Pre-Mauryan 142
Priests 2, 3, 4, 5, 11, 13, 17, 19, 21, 22, 25, 26, 27, 30, 31, 32, 33, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 44, 49, 50, 52, 65, 66, 67, 84, 86, 101, 132, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 823, 127, 160, 177, 185, 203, 204, 209, 213, 225
Priesthood 2, 3, 25, 28, 29, 30, 31, 35, 50, 100, 105, 106, 108, 121
Priestship 107
Proktā 80
Pṛṭhuka 95
Pukkas 93, 145, 192
Puṁsavana 135
Punishment 173
Purāṇa 18, 166, 184, 197
Puroḍaśa 95
Purohitas 16, 30, 31, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 53, 55, 74, 89, 97, 103, 105, 106, 109, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 145, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 167, 174, 204, 205
Purohitaship 37, 107, 162
Purumīlha 43, 46,
Pūṣan 16
Puṣkarasrag 6
Puṣyamitra 167, 198, 210
Roth 35
Royal grants 169
Royal priest 34, 162, 164
Ṛgveda 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 19, 21, 24, 25, 37, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 39, 43, 46, 48, 63, 67, 96, 104, 104, 110, 225
Ṛgveda Saṁhitā 52
Ṛgveda Aryans 8
Rice 13, 94, 95, 115
Ṛtvij 32, 160, 163, 204
Ṛṣi 11, 12, 29, 37, 77, 78, 88, 89, 99,
Ṛṣikalpa 77
Rudra 15
Rukma 65
Ruru 189
Racing 12
Rāhula 152, 157
Rājakartṛ 42

Rājaka 93
Rājas 61, 62
Rajat 6
Ram Saran Sharma 139
Rapson 171
Rasas 131
Rasanā 8
Rats 162
Rathakāra 69, 74, 75
Rathaesthas 28
Rathavīti 11
Ratna 6
Ratnahavis 42
Ratnins 14
Raychaudhuri 171
Rājā 124, 125
Rājagṛha 71, 175
Rājanya 2, 12, 16, 19, 29, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 52, 69, 70, 74, 145
Rājasūya 30, 42, 47, 50, 55, 52, 102, 164, 198
Rākṣasa 154, 162, 186, 189
Rāma 63
Rāma Margaveya 41
Rāśi 18
Rāṣṭra 50
Rāṣṭragopa 39
Rohiṇī 70
Romila Thaper 172
Sabhā 19, 20, 39
Sabhā Pariṣad 20
Sacred Thread 189
Sadasya 31, 110
Sagala 179
Sagotra 88, 89, 113, 155
Śākaṭāyana 80
Śākhās 10
Saktus 140
Śakvarī 95
Śākyas 157
Salt 92, 130, 131, 207
Sattra 107
Sāma 107
Sāman 33
Savarṇas 89
Sāyaṇa 18, 19
Scents 133
Scorpion craft 133
Seed 207
Senāpati 125, 128
Sanānī 39
Sesame 117, 129, 131, 207, 208
Sharma 3, 42, 47, 86, 87, 161, 165, 175
Sheep 44, 119, 130
Shoes 119
Siddhārtha 134
Śikṣaka 202
Silk 130
Sīla Jātaka 121
Silver 43, 44, 65, 118
Śipra 6
Sippāriya 81
Śiṣṭa 181, 109, 20
Snātaka 64, 65, 66, 77, 136, 137, 140, 192, 194, 201, 208, 212
Sobhari kāṇva 69
Śoḍaśini 110
Soma 14, 15, 33, 34, 41, 47, 50, 53, 54, 55, 136, 144, 146, 149, 161, 207, 209
Somadatta Jātaka 128
Samāvartana 65, 66, 68, 77
Sāmaveda 22, 111
Sambhinna 60
Samiti 19, 20, 110
Saṁghas 83
Saṁsthās 167
Saṁskāra 71, 79, 153
Śaṇa 75
Sanantkumāra 151
Śāṅkhāyana 22, 64, 68, 72, 96, 106, 108, 109, 113, 114, 115
Śantanu 2, 35, 37
Sautrāmaṇi 102
Sānti-Kammāṇī 133
Śapta-hotā 32
Sapiṇḍa 87, 88, 89, 94, 158
Sarpa Vidyā 18
Sasya 66
Śātapatha Brāhmaṇa 9, 10, 14, 16, 18, 21, 22, 23, 24, 27, 36, 37, 39,

43, 46, 47, 49, 50, 51, 53, 54, 55
Sātavāhanas 167, 172
Satyakāma 58, 71
Satyāṣāḍha 108, 109, 110
Śaunaka 24, 102, 187
Sauṣadana 40
Sauśravasa 41
Soma-juice 66
Soma-yājin 134
Soma-jātaka 129
Soma-Kratus 109
Soma-pā 46
Soma plantation 166
Sorcery 4
Spies 166, 167
Spiṇḍīkaraṇa 111
Śrāddha 87, 95; 96, 97, 111, 113, 114, 115, 118, 130, 139, 189, 194, 205, 208
Śrāddha-meals 110
Śrag 6, 65, 66
Śramaṇas 61, 68, 171
Śravaṇa Sambandhu 204
Śṛṅga 7
Sṛñjayas 38
Śrautarṣi 37
Śrotriya 18, 49, 77 80, 94, 115, 112, 132, 137, 138, 141, 144, 145, 145, 147, 147, 168, 169, 177, 174, 176, 177, 191, 205, 202, 209
Śrī 133
Srug 7
Śruti 59
Sthālikī 115
Stones 130
Stūpas 6
Subrahmaṇya 33, 110
Sudās 2
Śūdra 15, 16, 35, 39, 46, 50, 52, 58, 61, 62, 83, 87, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 100, 107, 109, 116, 130, 132, 139, 140, 141, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 156, 157; 171, 175, 176, 177, 179, 180, 186, 187, 188, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 199, 200, 203, 206, 207, 208, 212, 216, 218, 220, 221, 222, 223
Sudhanvā 126
Śuddhodana 211
Sugar 117, 207
Śulka 169
Sun 22
Śunaḥśepa 55
Śuṇḍa 190
Surā 14, 15, 97, 93, 189, 190
Surgeon-physician 45
Sukanyā 11
Śukla Brahmins 199
Śūlagava 108
Śunakaphelakāḥ 171
Suninda 124
Suśruta Saṁhitā 211
Sūtra-pravacana 77
Svādhyāya 17, 18
Śvapaca 93, 195
Śvapāka 176
Svarṇa 6
Śvetaketu 22; 71, 101
Sword 39
Śyāparṇas 17, 40
Śyāvāśva 11
Synod 165
Tamas 6
Tattirīya Āraṇyaka 2
Taittīriya Saṁhitā 16, 17, 37 43, 49, 54
Tarpaṇa 130
Taxila 71, 82, 117
Tāmbūla 115
Tāpasa 61
Tāpasavyañjana 167
Tiger 75
Tikicchakasamā 133
Tiller 128
Tillamutthi 82
Timber-133
Tiriṭa 7
Tīrthas 97, 152
Tokma 180
Tortoise 134, 189
Traders 133
Trasadasyu 11

Treasure-trove-212
Tricksters 133
Tṛiṣṭubh 16, 69, 75
Tri-śukra-18
Ubhayasnātaka 186
Uddālaka 23, 24,
Udgātā 31, 33, 44, 110, 111, 109, 119, 167
Udumbara 15, 76
Ugra 116
Uktha 101, 110
Umbrella 119, 185
Uñchavṛtti 166
Unnetā 31, 33, 110
Upagu 41
Upākarman 140
Upanayana 10, 23, 68, 70, 71, 72, 74, 76, 78, 101, 183, 184
Upaniṣad 57, 67, 71, 78, 79, 84, 88, 101, 103, 104, 106, 150
Upavaktā 32
Upavasana 5
Upādhyāya 79, 80, 202
Uśij 12
Uśīnara 84
Uṣṇīṣa 6
Uttara 70
Uttarīya 64
Vadhu 63
Vaikhānasa 88, 92, 93, 98, 110
Vaiṇa vaiśya 145
Vaiśvadeva 15, 139
Vaiśya 12, 15, 16; 21, 46, 50, 52, 61, 62, 68, 59, 70, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 83, 87, 89; 92, 93, 94, 99, 100, 107, 119, 126, 139, 145, 147, 148, 149, 155, 157, 175, 176, 183, 183, 184, 186, 188, 191, 192, 193, 197, 199, 207, 208, 209, 212, 215, 218, 219, 220, 223
Vajrasūcī 183
Vala 7, 209,
Valavalkar 73
Vaṁśa Brāhmaṇa 22
Varman 68
Varṇa 16, 16, 21, 29; 30, 48, 49, 52, 55, 67, 58, 59, 61, 62, 53, 64, 69, 70, 71, 76, 79, 84, 86, 87, 89, 91, 93, 94, 97, 100, 125, 137, 140, 143, 145, 147, 148, 149, 151, 152, 156, 165, 179, 183, 187, 188, 191, 192, 194, 197, 199, 208, 209, 210, 212, 216, 217, 219; 220, 221, 225
Varṇāśramadharma 154
Varṇasaṁkara 92, 154
Varuṇa 51, 53
Varuṇa Pāśa 8
Vasiṣṭha 8, 27, 31, 35, 37, 38, 39, 48, 58, 59, 79, 87, 89, 95, 100, 102, 110, 113, 114, 116, 117, 119, 120, 126, 128, 130, 131, 132, 135, 136, 138, 140, 141, 142, 143, 146, 147, 148, 149,
Vastra 5
Vatsa 11, 16
Vājapeya 17, 30, 36, 37, 66, 97, 109, 110, 119, 198,
Vākovākyam 184
Vāhīka 84
Vālhīka 84
Vānaprastha 72, 159
Vāṇijakasamā 133
Vārāha 68
Vāsana 5
Vāsas 75
Vātsyāyana 179
Vedi 202
Veṇuka 93
Vidatha 19, 20
Videha 24, 38,
Vidūra 66
Vidyā 184
Vidyā-snātaka 77, 180
Vidyā-Vrata-snātaka 77, 78
Vihāras 81
Vinaya Piṭaka 125
Vipra 19, 86
Viś 47, 49, 50
Viśvajit 120, 146
Viśvāmitra 2, 17, 27, 28, 35, 37, 39, 40, 48, 57, 89, 194
Viśvedevāḥ 69

Vrata 85, 86
Vratasnātaka 77, 180
Vratyās 74, 93, 155, 184
Vṛtra 3
Vṛṣala 183, 194
Vṛṣalī 83, 216
Vyāsa 63
Wagon-drivers 133
War-chief 2
Weber 25, 41, 42, 129
Wheat 13, 94
White 39
White-horses 44
Wild-paddy 15
Wizards 3
Wood 76, 136, 209
Wooden-elephant 135
Wool 76, 207
Woollen clothes 6
Yajamāna 39, 105, 107, 109, 113, 114, 139, 161, 198, 204
Yājñavalkya 22, 85, 104, 183, 184, 186, 187, 191, 200, 201, 204, 212, 218, 222
Yājñikas 134
Yajñopavīta 76
Yajurveda 33, 39, 55, 111,
Yakṣas 189
Yama 10, 22, 63, 137, 183
Yati 159
Yava 130
Yāska 2, 67, 79
Yoga 58
Yogakṣema 116
Yoni 204

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